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THE  
CAMBRIDGE HISTORY  
OF POLAND

1697-1935



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# THE CAMBRIDGE HISTOR OF POLAND

FROM AUGUSTUS II TO PILSUDSKI  
(1697-1935)

EDITED BY  
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*To*

THE MEMORY OF  
HAROLD TEMPERLEY



## PREFACE

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF POLAND, to be completed in two volumes, owes its origin to the initiative of Professor Harold Temperley and to friendly meetings inspired by him of Polish and British historians at Warsaw and in Cambridge. To his sponsorship was also due the generous help and encouragement received from the Polish government and, in particular, from their Ambassador, Count Edward Raczyński. The Editors deplore Professor Temperley's untimely death and dedicate to his memory the work which he saw far advanced but not completed. Planned in the autumn of 1936, it was designed to trace from the earliest times the antecedents of a nation which had lately been restored to liberty and which was building up a stable and progressive State. In 1939, when the narrative approached completion, however, Poland was suddenly subjected to a new partition, far more malicious and violent than those redressed by the Allies twenty years before.

Since the outbreak of war all literary communication with Poland has ceased. We know that all our Polish contributors have undergone great suffering. Many have been arrested or even flung into concentration camps. On 23 November 1939, Professor Dembiński died under the menace of deportation, and on 28 December Professor Estreicher, after enduring it. In this country, Miss Monica Gardner perished through enemy action in April 1941. Of the Editors, Professor Dyboski was cut off by the occupation of Cracow, and Professor Halecki, for several months, by the downfall of France. As it happens, however, the later half of the projected history has suffered less than the earlier and, as a study of the decline, the servitude and the rebirth of Poland, it now receives separate publication.

For the benefit of students unacquainted with the stages by which Poland reached her zenith in the sixteenth century and then declined, a brief Introductory Note has been inserted. Chapters III and IV throw light on her position in 1697, when the formal narrative begins. It is carried to the death of Marshal Pilsudski in 1935, very succinctly for the latest decade except on topics such as literature and

art where the sources are already fully known. In the volume dealing with the period before 1697, a political bibliography and a geographical survey covering the whole history will be included.

In the difficult question of nomenclature, the Editors' practice has been to print in their familiar form names which are commonly Anglicised, and, so far as possible, to present others as the several contributors desire. Alternative forms are often added in brackets, and thanks to the invaluable work of Mr A. P. Goudy, most difficulties may be removed by consultation of the index.

W. F. R.

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE year 1697, when after an interregnum, the Saxon Augustus succeeded John Sobieski (1674-96) as king, is universally regarded as a landmark in the decline of Poland. The Polish ruling class, incapable as then organized of a successful domestic or foreign policy, with elaborate ceremony entrusted its highest office to an unworthy German prince. Two Saxon reigns (1697-1763) brought Poland within sight of dismemberment and in 1795 she ceased to be a constituent state of Europe. With both German and Russian statesmen it had become an axiom that despite their eight centuries of history the Poles were for ever incapable of independence.

The long tragedy of which the final act began in 1697 originated at least as early as the era of the Reformation. Few can now doubt that the "golden freedom" of the Polish squires was chaos thinly gilded, or that their pride in a constitution which as they held drew the best from monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, sprang from failure to comprehend any of the three. The downfall in 1697 seems the more tragic that it followed swiftly on the resplendent triumph of 1683, when Polish troops led by a Polish king once again saved Europe from her invaders. The rescue of Vienna from the Turks by Sobieski was indeed the most famous achievement in all Polish history. Foreign nations could know little of the victor's domestic failures, or of the malorganization which was soon to paralyse both Poles and Turks. They could as little foresee the imminent advance of Russia. For Poland the rescue of Vienna was the last gleam of the setting sun.

By 1697, indeed, it was obvious that the Polish empire had failed to maintain the full amplitude of the early seventeenth century. Before Gustavus Adolphus (1611-32) had, in his later years, taught the Poles that Sweden was no longer "a petty foe", their empire had become the most spacious in Europe, comprising more than double the 150,000 square miles which were restored to them after the Great War of 1914-18. On the west, Poles and Germans faced each other across a frontier like that of 1922, in the north somewhat more ample but lacking the Silesian acquisitions further south. Towards the Baltic, however, East Prussia, like Danzig, was a Polish vassal, while modern Lithuania, Latvia and southern Estonia formed part of Poland. The tsardom of the Romanov dynasty in 1613 followed days in which at least the partition of Muscovy seemed imminent, and the sight of Poles in

occupation of the Kremlin did much to rouse the popular revolt which gave it birth. None the less, the Polish eastern frontier lay close to Pskov and embraced the vital fortress of Smolensk together with Kiev, the Jerusalem of the Russian race. Southern Poland included the Carpathians, and through its Dnieper region gained contact with the Black Sea.

A short half-century, however, sufficed to show the weakness of this vast domain. While the Swedish warrior-kings lopped off provinces in the north, formed leagues of spoliation and even marched into Galicia, the Hohenzollerns contrived to master East Prussia, and the Romanovs detached great areas in the east and south-east. After 1660 Poland renounced all Livonia save a southern fraction. In 1657 East Prussia was substantially conceded to the Great Elector, Frederick William of Brandenburg. The peace of Andrussow (1667) transferred to the Tsar a broad belt of White Russia, comprising Smolensk, Czernigov, Kiev and Pultava, and inevitably suggesting further advances along lines of race, geography and religion.

The fundamental cause of Polish retrogression was undoubtedly the overwhelming preponderance of the squires in the Polish state. There were other nations in Europe where history had given the acres and the administration to the warrior class. Only in Poland, however, did that class monopolize the wealth, the power and the administration, secular and spiritual, social and political, of the whole countryside. When the growth of the grain trade opened new perspectives to Poland the squires were the producers. Titles of nobility were banned and, although the economic preponderance of a dozen families made them petty kings, every gentleman was eligible for the double hierarchy of offices which the Polish-Lithuanian state maintained. A Polish squire, dictator to his serfs and deeming the king his equal, was warranted in regarding himself as the joint ruler of the nation.

The "gentry outlook" fostered by the circumstances of Polish life might well be heightened by consciousness of the glories of Poland's past. Few nations in the first six centuries of their history have produced so many distinguished rulers. From Boleslas the Brave (992-1025) to the Hungarian Stephen Batory (1576-86), a monarch unsurpassed in vigour and success, the list is punctuated with considerable names. Casimir the Great (1333-70), Jadwiga (1384-99), who founded an empire and may yet be canonized a saint, Sigismund I (1506-48), famed both for extending the boundaries of the empire and for advancing Polish culture, his son Sigismund Augustus (1548-72), under whom Poland reached her zenith—these

are perhaps the chief of the hereditary kings. Among great uncrowned Poles, Copernicus (1473-1543) and Stwosz (better known as Veit Stoss, 1438-1533) rank high in Europe, while Łaski and Zamoyski are but the foremost in the superb galaxy of the sixteenth century, Poland's golden age.

National achievements were no less brilliant. The overthrow of the Teutonic Knights at Tannenberg (Grunwald) in 1410 was the Trafalgar or Waterloo of Polish history. The attraction of Lithuania and her incorporation in 1569 shaped the future for generations. Batory's triumphs over Tartars and Muscovites, followed by the creation in 1596 of the Uniate Church, which enabled Greek Catholics to become subject to the Pope, made the last quarter of the sixteenth century resplendent. With or above these notable collective achievements may be ranked the establishment, by centuries of evolution, of certain salient national characteristics. Eloquence, sensibility, artistic talent, hospitality and charm—these the Poles share with other branches of the Slavonic race. In tolerance, in fortitude and in capacity for family life they had already become unsurpassed.

The seventeenth century none the less saw Poland ripen for her downfall in the eighteenth. The curtailment of her empire had but begun. How could a disintegrating nation resist vastly increased pressure from without?

In domestic disintegration and in foreign pressure the long reign of Sigismund III, the first Swedish king of Poland (1587-1632), has a sad pre-eminence. The so-called "King of the Jesuits" identified with aggressive Romanism a state formerly famous for tolerance. Such a policy challenged both Sweden, fundamentally Lutheran, and Muscovy, which was no less fundamentally Greek, while the tolerant Hohenzollerns of Berlin were Polish vassals for Protestant East Prussia. Before Sigismund died the Swedes had conquered Riga and paved the way for the amazing incursions of later years. The Hohenzollerns and Romanovs, however, were to be yet more dangerous foes, the one through the military monarchy which the Great Elector (1640-88) initiated, the other, because all the eastern Polish borderlands were Russian in speech and faith. When Little Russia joined with Moscow, Poland lost much of her Ukraine. In combating Russia, moreover, the Poles were handicapped by the inexorable decline of the unprogressive Turkish power, the Muscovites' natural foe.

Poland's most dangerous enemies, however, were the laws and customs in which her squires embodied their victory over all other forces in Church and State. The aversion of the gentry from trade was

fatal to Polish town life or maritime endeavour, while their greed for power and revenue kept benefices in their hands and caused the enslavement of the peasants. To safeguard their individual and collective independence, parliament became a mere conference of their envoys. By exercising his *liberum veto*, a single deputy could "explode" the assembly and annihilate the legislation of a session. Of the fifty-five biennial sessions after 1652, forty-eight were thus destroyed. The Polish remedy of "confederation", the formation of an armed league for effecting public aims, seemed to foreign observers merely legalized rebellion. Worst of all was the shattering of that monarchy which for several centuries had done most to render Poland great. When the Jagiellon dynasty (1386-1572) died out, the squires made the crown elective, binding every king-elect by *pacta conventa*, agreements by which he assumed new burdens and ceded ancient powers. In order that the sovereign might be weak and taxation light, the standing army and the national revenue became derisory. In a century and a quarter Poland experienced all the classic defects which have made elective monarchies "beacons of warning in history". Choice by a vast body of gentry assembled under arms meant faction fights, intrigues, corruption by foreign candidates, and the impulsive or fantastic choice of men. A king of Poland, wrote an Irish resident, is styled a king of kings and lord of lords, since he hath no better than companions and equals for his subjects.

Such was "the nation", gifted but misguided, proud alike of its past history and "crazy constitution", which assembled in May 1697 to fill the throne of Sobieski.

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY SAXON PERIOD, 1696-1733

THE interregnum which followed the death of King John Sobieski and the subsequent election were of great consequence both to Europe and to Poland. To the former, since on the outcome of the election to the Polish throne depended the freedom of action of the Emperor Leopold who, conscious of the fact that a war over the Spanish Succession was becoming more and more probable, was compelled to concentrate all his forces on the western front. With a Bourbon as neighbour in Warsaw, it was no easy task for a Hapsburg to push his claim to the Spanish throne. The list of candidates for the throne of Poland contained ten names, of whom three were French, with the Duke François Louis de Conti as the most prominent; one Italian, don Livio Odescalchi, the nephew of Pope Innocent XI; one Pole, Prince James Sobieski, and five Germans, most of whom, e.g. Max Emmanuel, Elector of Bavaria, Louis, Margrave of Baden, and Frederick Augustus of the house of Wettin, Elector of Saxony, were warriors of no mean repute.

To the Republic, this moment was equally important, for on the election depended not only her foreign policy but also her interior development. If Prince James counted on the charm of his name in the field, he was to meet with bitter disappointment. The Lubomirskis and the Sapieha House, taking advantage of the disgruntled, unpaid troops, stirred them up against hetman Jabłonowski, Sobieski's devoted friend. True, a special Commission had succeeded in pacifying the rebel soldiery, but the best period for agitation had passed. Popular displeasure with Queen Maria Casimira and the Prince was in evidence during the Convocation, 29 August-27 September, of that year. The French ambassador, *abbé Polignac*, spared not millions in his effort to win the votes of the *clergy*, *magnates*, and of the provincial leaders. He was morally certain of success, for, on the one hand, he claimed the support of Cardinal Radziejewski, Poland's Primate, the Sapiehas and the Lubomirskis, while the nation, tired of war and compelled to make many sacrifices in favour of the rebellious army, earnestly longed for peace; and peace with Turkey and the recovery of Podolia with the Ukraine were the terms offered by Louis XIV, if Conti were elected. One by one Prince James, the Elector of Bavaria, the Margrave of Baden, the Princes of Lorraine and Neuburg with-



drew from the campaign. There remained but one name—the name of him who was the last to register, Frederick Augustus of Saxony. In May of that year, uncertain of his future lot, he betook himself secretly to the monastery of Baden, near Vienna, where a few weeks later (2 June) he renounced Protestantism; in fact, he permitted his agents to announce publicly, long before, that he would be a prudent defender of Catholicity and that he would restore to Poland her lost possessions at his own cost. After the French Embassy had prodigally spent its gold, the Saxon agents, Flemung, Beichling and Przebendowski, intensified their propaganda, chiefly among the friends of the Sobieski Family. The representatives of the other Germanic courts supported them. Russia categorically asserted that she would consider Conti, who was a friend of the Sultan, her enemy. On the day of election, 27 June, huge crowds acclaimed Conti King. The number of voters who, on the next day, “signed” the election of Augustus, however, more than doubled the number of John Sobieski’s electors in 1674. Hence Dąbski, the Bishop of Kujawia, proclaimed the elector of Saxony, now Augustus II, King of Poland.

The Wettin waited for this information with an army recruited with the aid of Saxon and Jewish money. Passing through Silesia, he made his way to Poland, and in Piekary, on 27 July, he solemnly promised to observe the *Pacta Conventa*. No one opposed him, for Conti could not easily make up his mind as to the advisability of accepting a crown which was so uncertain and so distant.

The French Party failed to send a representative either to the Act of Coronation of Augustus II or to the Diet which followed it. Hence, as Conti approached Danzig with six French frigates, he not only did not receive a hearty welcome from the Germans, but failed to meet any Poles ready to espouse his claim, and therefore, on 6 November, he set sail for France.

The Primate, powerless in his wrath, realized that he was fighting for a lost cause, and at the Assembly held in Warsaw, 26 August, organized his followers into a “*rokosz*” in order that he might later bargain with the victor for a compromise favourable to his own party. This bargaining between Augustus and the “malcontents” went on for many months, until it reached a crisis at the Pacification Diet, in June 1699, which ratified Augustus’ *Pacta Conventa* and buried the enmity between the various Lithuanian parties. The opposition merely masked its bitter disappointment, however, and this mask would be thrown off at the first reverse of the King, who in their eyes was a usurper.

For two generations, the common link binding two nations, one numbering twelve millions and predominantly Catholic, the other Protestant and counting two million inhabitants, was the person of the sovereign, enterprising, wealthy, and belonging to a dynasty that commanded the respect of all Europe. At first sight, this union appeared wholesome, for it brought about a beneficial exchange of products. In return for their enormous natural wealth, the Polish-Ruthenian population could procure not only the products of the highly organized Saxon industry, but, what was of greater value, it could adopt a superior material culture from the industrious and thrifty Saxons. The points of difference between these nations were religion and geography (Silesia). Silesia, foreign in name, was germanized merely on the surface. Racially and linguistically, it was thoroughly Polish. The only possibility of acquiring this necessary corridor was by combating the Hapsburgs. This, however, was not the goal of Augustus' policy in 1697. The exchange of temporal and spiritual goods between Poland and Saxony was something beyond his reach; the annual income of 3,000,000 zł., forthcoming from Poland, he squandered to satisfy his whims and fancies and to bribe the citizens. The enormous fortunes extorted from the electorate, he sank in wars, whose arena, target and victim were destined to be the Kingdom of the Jagiellons and Vasas.

The secret of this fiasco lay more on the side of the monarch, and to a lesser degree in the nature of his new subjects. Augustus the Strong, a perfect athlete in form, a veritable Don Juan, a hedonist and an egoist, dreamed that he was destined to be the Louis XIV of the East. Yet, while other autocrats and especially the Hohenzollerns succeeded in identifying their policy with their country's welfare, he was of the opinion that the world existed for his personal enjoyment. He chose Poland as the object of his experiment, for in some occultist tract he had read a prophecy that fate would lead him through Warsaw to fame in Constantinople. He estranged the Saxons by his cynical apostasy. By a series of outrageous betrayals he poisoned the life of his wife Christiana Eberhardina Hohenzollern-Bayreuth, a pious Lutheran, to such an extent that she stated she would never enter Poland as queen. The Poles, i.e. those of the higher classes, the knights of the Sobieski school, he scandalized by his sybaritic life, his spendthrift ways, and his perfidy. The worst prognostications arose from the glaring contrast existing between his ideals and the ideals of the nation. The nobility, at that time at the height of its "golden freedom", looked down with scorn upon the subjugated

Germanic race, at times thinking themselves the peers of electors like Augustus, and in the "Pact" stipulated that the King must heed the advice of his national constitutional counsellors and not the advice of foreigners. Augustus, on the other hand, a King "by the grace of God", was sure that he could easily break down the "senseless liberty" of the Sarmatians. In case of opposition, he would seek aid from his relatives and neighbours, to whom he would offer Polish soil as a recompense. This is the first and perhaps the only example of a King who, at the outset, annually, and later every few years began to bargain with the enemies of the Republic, for her dismemberment. This bargain was never completed, however, for the King's absolute rule even over a reduced state could never satisfy them.

Augustus entered upon his policy by offering Elbing to the Elector of Brandenburg. By virtue of a formal agreement in Johannisburg, 17 June 1698, he allowed Frederick III to take the city by surprise, which the latter did on 11 November, when the Polish army was on the Ruthenian front. When the Senate later condemned this pact, the Polish commissioners retook the city in 1700. Since the Republic did not pay off its ransom at the proper time, in 1703 with the consent of the King, the Prussian army again occupied Elbingian territory with the exception of the town itself. The King counted on open hostilities between Brandenburg and Poland, in which the former would sap the strength of the latter and teach it submission.

This plan failed completely. The neighbour took advantage of Augustus' approval and arranged for his coronation at Königsberg (18 January 1701) as King of Prussia, but did not support Saxon plans. In two Diets held in 1701, several deputies protested against the new title as injurious to the rights of Poland. The most influential senators, however, won over to the court of Berlin, were reconciled with the *fait accompli*. Augustus received the pledge of Russian aid from Tsar Peter when the latter was on his "European travels" in April 1697, and later when, on negotiating for concerted action against Turkey and Sweden, he offered the Tsar mutual guarantees against their respective rebellious subjects. Yet all in vain. Harmony with the court of Vienna, which feared his rivalry in Germany, was too much to expect. At one time Augustus was not only willing but actually took steps towards an alliance with France (1700), but he soon realized the dire consequences of such a move and offered a considerable part of his armed forces to the Emperor for the War of the Spanish Succession.

The greater were the difficulties encountered by the King in his secret machinations against his new subjects, the more he trusted his

"martial star". He was determined that victories should pave his path to "sovereignty". The promise of recovering the lost Polish provinces, which was contained in the *Pacta Conventa*, referred chiefly to Kamieniec and Podolia. This however did not satisfy Augustus' appetite. Hence in 1698, before the maritime Powers were able to mediate a Peace between the Porte and the League, he tried to wrest from the Turk Moldavia and Wallachia, the actual goal of Sobieski's campaigns. From the side of Poland, hetman Felix Potocki entered upon a successful campaign in the vicinity of Podhajce, routing there a strong force of Tartar cavalry (9-10 September 1698). Unfortunately, a short time later (22 September) at Brzeżany, a conflict between Polish and Saxon troops was avoided by the narrowest of margins. Ambitious designs collapsed. Poland's ambassador, Stanislas Małachowski, hastened to the Peace Conference at Karlowitz (Karlówice) with one trump card in his hand: "Sobieski's services to Christianity." Hence, thanks to the efforts of his predecessor and not to those of Augustus himself, Poland with the aid of Austria not only received Podolia and the Ukraine, by virtue of the treaty signed on 26 January 1699, but gained another victory no less important—Turkey as a friendly neighbour—a fact of paramount value to both in the face of the rising power of Russia which threatened them.

At the very time when Augustus II was ratifying this treaty, he was already bent on taking the field once more—this time to acquire not for the Republic, but for himself, Poland's former possession—Livonia. In August 1698, he met Tsar Peter in Rawa Ruska, where, draining wineglasses, they plotted an attack on the Swedish possessions lying on this side of the Baltic, whereas Denmark, as the third member of this alliance, was to acquire Holstein and the territory lying beyond the Sound.

Augustus, born in 1670, already of age in knowledge and strength, had an ascendancy over the semi-barbarous Romanov, as far as the political culture of Europe was concerned, and therefore took upon himself the less difficult part of the enterprise, the attack on Livonia. Sweden under the youthful and seemingly fickle Charles XII appeared to be doomed. Did Poland's interests and hers alone demand the victory of the allies? Such, in truth, was the opinion of Augustus' German counsellors, e.g. Fleming and the rebellious Livonian leader of the anti-Swedish faction, Patkul. The most loyal among Polish senators, Bishop Załuski and Vice-chancellor Szczuka, called attention to the fact that Kiev was of infinitely greater importance to the Republic than Riga, and that for the future Russia and not Sweden must be weakened.

The internal situation did not encourage risk, for in the very year 1700, the former Lithuanian feud between the Sapieha family and the other members of the local aristocracy, upon which Augustus looked with favour, in the spirit of his slogan "divide et impera", broke out once more. On 2 November, the nobility and higher gentry cut to pieces the court troops of the Sapiehas and wreaked vengeance on the possessions of these stiff-necked oligarchs. All this took place six months after Fleming's unfortunate attack on Riga, shortly after the Peace of Traventhal between Charles XII and Denmark, and immediately before the brilliant victory of the Swedish leader over Peter the Great at Narva (20 November). Charles cut down Augustus' armies at the Dvina (9-20 July) and thereupon entering Courland threw his protecting arms about the Sapieha brothers, who fled thither from Lithuania. The Swedish King then issued the stern command to the Poles—either dethrone the Saxon or risk a war. Before the Polish Senate could take action in regard to this extraordinary challenge, the Swedes captured Wilno and Warsaw, overcame Augustus at Kliszów (19 July), where the Polish army refused to fight, and took Cracow without a shot, thereby cancelling Poland's neutrality in respect to the Northern War.

Dethronements were frequent during the Middle Ages, and occasional in England and Sweden during modern times, but were absolutely unheard of in Poland. In fact, free popular elections created there a bond practically indissoluble between the nation and the crown. At this particular time a foreigner tried to sever this bond. Hence the nobles, by no means loyal to their sovereign, were now cut to the quick—in their national pride. Augustus the Strong immediately convoked the Senate and later formed the Confederation of Sandomierz (22 August 1702), and the following year summoned the Diet of Lublin (June-July 1703) at which the Primate and the Poznań malcontents were outraged; a levy of 48,000 troops was voted and the King was empowered to negotiate treaties. The short distance separating them from the well-armed Swedish forces encouraged the enemies of the court to form a Confederation of Great Poland and later to hold a General Assembly at Warsaw, January 1704.

Cardinal Radziejowski initiated an act renouncing obedience to Augustus and proposed a new election. Due to a lack of candidates, since the Saxons at Breslau "kidnapped" Princes James and Constantine Sobieski, the choice fell upon the youthful Stanislas Leszczyński, the Palatine of Poznań, whose father Raphael was a

bitter enemy of Russia and a lover of liberty ("malo periculosam libertatem, quam quietum servitium"). In terror of Swedish muskets, hoping to avoid requisitions and to pacify the country, less than 1000 of the nobility proclaimed Leszczyński King, on 12 July 1704.

Meanwhile the vast majority of the nation rallied to the standard of the German King, for they were driven to it by force and fraud. Tsar Peter took advantage of the Cossack Insurrection under Palej in 1702, and gave the Poles to understand that he would enforce the restoration to Poland of that portion of the Ukraine (Białocerkiew) which the Cossacks had taken, provided the Republic joined him. This same Tsar succeeded in tempting into a separate treaty with Moscow (1703) that part of Lithuania which was opposed to the Sapieha faction, with the result that the Kingdom of Poland would either be compelled to do the same, or renounce its union with the Duchy. Augustus II, through Saxon diplomacy and without consulting Poland, created new *faits accomplis* and whetted Poland's appetite for Livonia. Thus the nation witnessed an extraordinary schism. On 20 May the newly organized General Confederation of Sandomierz Loyalists under Stanislas Denhof raised its standard against Cardinal Radziejowski and the Warsaw malcontents, creating a situation in which the country had two Kings, two Primates, two General Confederations, two hetmans and two political systems.

On 30 August 1704, the Saxon faction drew up, at Narva, the so-called Działyński Pact with the Tsar. At first sight this treaty appeared advantageous to Poland, for it assured her financial and military aid as well as the restoration of Livonia. But under the pretext of offering her aid, Russia would carry on a long campaign in Poland-Lithuania, all this at the expense of the latter's inhabitants, and this (seemingly) "helpful occupation" would be an introduction to the ultimate seizure of this territory by the occupants. The partisans of Sweden assumed the role of dictating in Warsaw (18 November 1705) a treaty, most humiliating to the Polish nation, fatal to Polish trade, and injurious to Catholicism. Not without reason was Leszczyński suspected of bargaining Courland and parts of Livonia for Swedish protection. For two years the rivals Peter and Charles fought for their titles and their prerogatives on Polish soil.

Courland was taken by the Russians. At the Tsar's command, the Cossacks under the leadership of Ivan Mazepa invaded Volhynia. The forces of Augustus and Stanislas were equally matched, hence the devastating war lingered on hopelessly. Not one Polish city, not even Lwów—*virgo intacta* as it was called—was able to withstand

Charles. The Saxon formed strategic plans for the Republic's reconquest, plans which called for a co-ordinated attack from east and west. With this in mind he met the "Great Russian" in Grodno, in November 1708, only to scamper off at once before the approaching Swede. A Great Elector on the Prussian throne would have rushed into this disturbance for the sake of booty, but the weak Frederick I was content to stretch forth his hand, now and then, for Polish Pomerania and Danzig, only to withdraw it, at the sight of the armed paw of the Swedish Lion.

The year 1706 brought new triumphs to Sweden. First of all, on 3-14 February, Saxon regiments sent to seize Poland were routed by Rehnschöld at Fraustadt. Secondly, in September, the Swedish King himself, by a surprise offensive through Silesia, trampled upon Augustus in Saxony, and imposed an ignominious treaty upon him at Altranstädt (24 September), by which the Elector of Saxony was forced to give up the crown of Poland, to recognize Stanislas, to abandon Peter and to punish Patkul. Subterfuge availed nothing. The Sybarite, crushed under the heavy heel of him who styled himself "Guds fiskal på jorden" (God's attorney on earth), threatened with the destruction of Saxony, was forced to congratulate Leszczyński and wish him success, in person. He then hastened to Flanders, to study strategy under Marlborough at Lille, and to dream of new crowns, wherever they might be gained, in Naples or Jerusalem.

Stanislas, then thirty years old, with all his mental acumen and social ability could not bear the weight of the royal diadem. Of little consequence to him, was the fact that Charles in Saxony, poised like an eagle over battle-scarred Europe, was forcing recognition for him from France, England, Holland, the Emperor, Prussia, but not from the Pope; while in his own country no one, not compelled to do so, respected his election. Could he exert influence on any one, after Charles forbade him to convoke Diets and left him but one prerogative, that of removing political enemies from public office? Charles did not even hearken to his plea of mitigating the cruelties of the Swedes, though he had every reason to petition. This "Protector" recognized but one method in his dealings with the Poles, "burn, destroy, rob, arrest". Since the Russians so often responded with terror for terror, the conciliatory policy of Leszczyński was of little consequence.

The leaders of the Sandomierz Confederacy, Constantine Szaniawski, Bishop of Kujawia, hetman Stanislas Denhof, hetman Adam Sieniawski, the Primate Stanislas Szembek and his brother John, the Royal Chancellor, Stanislas Chomentowski, taken by surprise

at the news of Augustus' resignation, claimed that they alone were the true representatives of the Polish nation, restored their assemblies at Lwów, and negotiated an agreement with their "protector" Peter the Great, in the matter of a new election. On 8 July, they in turn, at Lublin, proclaimed an interregnum, all this, of course, the result of the Tsar's terror, and looked about for suitable candidates for the crown. The venerable Szczuka earnestly tried to bridge this chasm of discord which threatened to swallow up Poland. Yet the fratricidal war continued with little hope of success for Stanislas.

Charles XII attempted to cut this gordian knot by attacking Moscow. In the autumn of 1707, he led an offensive against Minsk, in which aid was expected from Livonia and Finland, while Mazeppa, for some time plotting with Leszczyński, might put the whole Ukraine on horseback. The offensive met with a determined resistance of the well-disciplined Russians and was compelled to deviate from its intended course toward the Ukraine. Reinforcements from Livonia were cut down at Lesna (9 October 1708), while the Ukrainian insurrection brought forth a few thousand swords instead of the promised thirty thousand.

After the severe winter of 1708-9, the decimated Swedish force besieged Poltawa and under its walls gave battle to an overwhelmingly superior army of Peter's (27 June-8 July). Neither the Tartar Khan, who received the appeal for help too late, nor Leszczyński, for he had not been allowed to reunite the Poles, could take the field at the decisive moment and this spelled doom for their cause. One day sufficed for the burial of Sweden's imperial sway, of the Ukraine's freedom, and of Leszczyński's regime in Poland.

Augustus anticipated this very situation and in good time sought Prussian and Danish aid in recovering the throne. He had scarcely entered Poland when Stanislas and his Swedish allies escaped to Pomerania. In Thorn, the King and the Tsar, who had not seen each other for four years, renewed their former League (20 October 1709). Their respective roles, however, had since been changed. Now the Wettin received the kingdom from the hands of the Romanov, who, as the "Redeemer of Polish liberty", had his eye fixed on his absolutist designs, considered Poland his dependency and for this reason rejected every thought of her dismemberment, ideas conceived in Berlin and approved in Dresden.

With the exception of a small group of Polish "Swedomaniacs" who accompanied Charles XII and Mazeppa to Turkey, all Poland rallied round the Saxon King. He conceived the thought, therefore,



that he might perhaps attempt to rule Poland without a Diet, but when the General Federal Assembly met in Warsaw (February—April) his loyal senators and the representatives of the gentry gave him to understand that Liberty, the Diet, and the "Pacta Conventa" must remain in force. On such foundations did the Assembly reconstruct Augustus' regime in Poland.

Dangers continued to threaten Augustus, not so much from the side of Sweden, but from Turkey. The Lion of the North and Mazeppa found a den in Bender. Charles' agents and especially Stanislas Poniatowski, who was now beginning his brilliant career, aided by the French and Cossacks, called the Porte's attention to the dire consequence of events in the north. Russia crushed the Ukraine's freedom, made the Poles her dependents and began to raise the hopes of the Christians in the Balkans. After Mazeppa's death, hetman Philip Orlik, who succeeded him, made a treaty with the Tartars, with this in mind, that with the Swedes as protectors, and with the actual aid of the Turks, he would recover a free state on either side of the Dnieper for the Cossacks.

The Polish Emigrants relied upon this same help, but their calculation proved false, for the vizier Mehmed Baltadzi declared war on Augustus and Peter, to compel Leszczyński, when restored to the throne, to return to the boundaries extant before 1699. The Tsar, left in the lurch by his Balkan allies just as Charles had been by the Cossacks, was forced to make a memorable treaty at his camp on the Prut, a treaty in which he promised not to interfere in the affairs of Poland and the Ukraine (12-23 July 1711). Whereupon the Porte attempted to seize the Ukraine but not the portion to the east, beyond the Dnieper, which she did not acquire from Peter, but the Western Ukraine, which according to the Treaty of Karlowitz belonged to Poland. The latter she intended to give to the Cossacks. Sweden and Poland were, of course, opposed to this seizure. Orlik also readily realized that he would not be able to maintain a free Ukraine against Poland's will, though he might do so under Poland's supremacy. This danger, however, menaced the southern boundary of the Republic as long as Charles and the Emigrants incited the Turks to a new campaign.

In the north, the Prussian King, ever coveting Danzig and Pomerania, was enticing the Swedes, by holding out the prospect of a treaty. During the years 1711-13, Swedish partisans had already tried to stir up an insurrection against Augustus, little realizing what a price Poland would be forced to pay for such an "emancipation". The bulk

of the nation, however, remained loyal to the restored King, and because of this fact Augustus was able to counteract the intrigues of the malcontents (John and Stanislas Jablonowski), to issue a dignified reply to the Turks and not to overestimate the onerous Russian amity. The pacification of the West after the War of the Spanish Succession (1713) permitted Austria to concentrate her attention and forces on the situation in the East. When this was brought to its attention, it (the Porte) declared to the Polish ambassador, Stanislas Chomentowski, that the Treaty of Karlowitz would be respected (27 April 1714). Charles, in the meantime, hastened to Pomerania to save his Fatherland from complete ruin. From this entire crisis in the East, Poland reaped her harvest in the form of the so-called Treaty of the Prut, though it was signed without her and in the beginning was contrary to her best interests. According to this treaty, renewed later in Adrianople in 1712, and in Constantinople in 1713, Russia was forbidden to march her troops into the Republic. The future was to show how the Tsar respected his obligations.

While the Porte was engaged in new wars with Venice (1714-18) and with Austria (1716-18), Poland was the scene of a commotion called the Confederation of Tarnogród. Years ago all were sure that Augustus II purposely caused this upheaval in order that he might later assume the role of arbiter between the Saxon troops and the nobility, and destroy the so-called "Golden Freedom". To-day all are agreed that the conspiracies and riotous assemblies of 1714-15 were excited, on the one hand, by Russia through hetmans Pociej and Sieniawski, and on the other, by the former Swedish partisans who tried to turn this ferment to the advantage of Leszczyński. At any rate here was a Saxon provocation and the Palatinates, losing their patience, formed confederacies, at first, within their respective boundaries, and these, in turn, sent delegates to Tarnogród (26 November 1715) to form a General Confederacy, under the presidency of the energetic and clever patriot Stanislas Ledóchowski. The number of confederates gradually reached 50,000, and though Field-marshal Fleming had under his control the principal cities, Warsaw, Poznań, Cracow and Lwów, he faced the difficult task of doing something with the Confederates, whose aim was to rid themselves of the foreign Saxon yoke, and under no condition to surrender to the Tsar. Ledóchowski knew, however, that the King would accept the aid of the Tsar without scruple, and the hetmans were able to whisper the proper suggestion to Ledóchowski, that it would be better to inform the King of these manœuvres at once.

Keener politicians among the senators and even Fleming himself realized that it was possible to escape foreign intervention only by making a speedy agreement with the King. A pact was not signed, however. In April 1716, the delegate of the King and Ledóchowski aired their grievances at Danzig before the Tsar's ministers who, in turn, charged Augustus with disloyalty to his allies and with leanings to independent action. An understanding was finally reached by which the Russian delegate Gregory Dolgoruky was to negotiate with the warring parties, while the Tsar would use his power against the faction that presented the more serious difficulties. No other Christian state attempted to intervene, while the services of the Porte and of the Khan were set aside. When, to complete the tale of misfortune, the confederates suffered a serious reverse in Pomerania, at the hands of fresh Saxon regiments (at Kowalewo, on 5 October), Tsar Peter, then in Western Europe, with the consent of his "friend" became the arbiter in the internal affairs of Poland. The pact was signed in Warsaw on 3 November 1716, and ratified by the Diet in January-February 1717, which, without any discussion (hence it was called the "Silent Diet") gave it the force of law.

The monumental work of this Diet marks a memorable date, not only of the Saxon Period, but in the whole history of Poland. For the sake of peace which was Poland's cherished goal for thirty-three years, i.e. from 1683, or rather from the death of Ladislas IV in 1648, if we disregard the short lapse from 1677 to 1683, the old system was restored, a system based on the balance of majesty (King), authority (Senate), and of freedom (the nation). Only the more astute statesmen were able to discern how uncertain and injurious this balance actually was. The keen and understanding noble of the Palatinate of Sandomierz, Stanislas Karwicki, in his treatise *De ordinanda Republica* (1705-7), had lately shown that constant wrestling "inter Majestatem et Libertatem" saps the strength of the nation, and that therefore the nation should assume responsibility for its fate, should create a permanent representation in the Diet, should deprive the King of means of corruption euphemistically called "panis bene merentium", and concentrating the government in the hands of republican organs, reduce the King to the position of a Venetian doge. Although it was not certain whether Poland, surrounded by absolute monarchies, could thus be saved, the system was logical. Augustus the Strong and Fleming were able to offer only one other system in its stead, that of a monarchy with a Senate and a National Council, nominated after the Dutch pattern, with local assemblies but with a legislative

Diet that was able to function. Rarely did the thought strike anyone to reform the Diet by the abolition of the *liberum veto*. All this had no effect, however, on the compromise of 1717. The King would continue to reward the "men of worth", to take necessary counsel with the Senate and to yield to the will of its majority. For the future, all confederacies are abolished, local assemblies lose the right to levy local taxes except the so-called "czopowe" and "szeleżne" (a form of excise), and finally, from the end of the seventeenth century, usurp the self-adjourning prerogative. The *liberum veto* remained in all its vigour, the army was reduced to 18,000 in Poland, and to 6000 in Lithuania. In order that the nation might not be compelled to take thought for its own security or defence, the army would be maintained by its own resources, through money collected from clearly defined sources and objects. The number of soldiers would be further reduced since one-third of these taxes would go to maintain the officers.

While the injurious elements of the statute of 1717 were not immediately recognized, both King and people soon perceived the real significance of Dolgoruky as mediator. After the "Silent Diet" adjourned, there was a strong reaction against Russia. On every side there were accusations against Peter, charging him with occupying Courland under the pretext of raising the dowry for his cousin Anna Ivanovna, whose husband, a Kettler, died immediately after their marriage, with oppressing Danzig as a penalty, for Peter demanded four frigates, with carrying on trade with Sweden, with failure to give Livonia to Poland, though he promised to do so in 1704, and most of all with maintaining an armed force in Poland. These were the grievances of the King and Ledóchowski, who looked about for satisfaction by direct negotiations, and when the Tsar resorted to subterfuge, Augustus received strong support against him from the other courts.

The sudden rise and growth of the Russian Power afforded no little trouble to the rulers of Central and Western Europe. The Emperor Charles VI could not look with indifference on the reckless conduct of the Russian regiments in Mecklenburg nor could he condone the "kidnapping" of Prince Alexis from Naples, nor Russia's dictatorial rule in Poland. The City of London cautiously eyed the rapid expansion of Russia's merchant marine. Against these Powers of another day, the Tsar sought aid from every source. He negotiated with Charles XII's minister Görtz for a united front against the other members of the Northern Coalition. If Poland were expected to pay the expenses connected with the upkeep of this Russian-Swedish compromise, Leszczyński would succeed Augustus on the Polish throne.

Augustus insured himself against such surprises by drawing nearer to Vienna and London, and at the same time by sincerely and earnestly appealing to Poland's instinct of self-preservation. During the Diet held in Grodno late in 1718, the senators in conference with Dolgoruky in harsh terms and unequivocally showed the intruding guests the way home. The atmosphere was tense, hence not even the concerted action of Russia and Prussia could disrupt that assembly. The Diet, employing a custom rarely used (1712, 1718, 1724), was postponed until the King called it anew after testing the negotiations. Immediately afterwards, 5 January 1719, the English and Saxon delegates signed a treaty with Charles VI at Vienna, which was exceptionally beneficial to Poland. Accordingly, the three sovereigns by diplomacy or if necessary by force would compel the Russians to abandon Germany and Poland, and the latter received a further assurance that her boundaries and dependencies would be kept intact. Augustus was guaranteed that in the strengthening of his government he would receive aid against all foreign intrigues. Under such pressure the Russians left Poland, and Polish firmness would determine how long they remained away.

At this critical moment all the four Polish-Lithuanian hetmans thought it proper to settle their accounts with Fleming, who received the command of that part of the troops of the Republic that was trained after the model of Western Europe. In fear lest they lose their prerogatives and "Golden Freedom", the hetmans offered their services to Russia. They attained their purpose by frightening the nobility with a possible war. Hence the Diet convoked in 1719-20 not only refused to approve the Treaty of Vienna but condemned every possibility of a military outbreak and adjourned without any definite resolution. Thus the main link of the great Swedish-Austrian-Saxon-Polish chain, by which Charles and George thought of stopping Russian expansion, burst.

Another appeal to the minds and hearts of the estates was made in autumn of the same year but with worse results. Even the extraordinary ambassador Chomentowski, who was sent to induce the Tsar to make further concessions, through his reports on Russian power weakened the courage of the estates in session. There were long declamations about liberty and grievances, and means of rectifying the same, but no one was ready to shed a drop of blood in defence of the former and to satisfy the latter. In such circumstances, Augustus' Political Anti-Russian Plan was stranded on the shoals of ill-timed pacifism.

Russia's triumph was complete. Augustus the Strong, fired against

Poland, leaned once more toward her bitterest enemies Russia and Prussia. With his authorization the noted Court Jew Bernd Lehmann presented in Berlin a new plan of dismembering Poland and sent it to Vienna. The Tsar not only rejected this project but immediately revealed it to the Poles in order that he might stand forth as their sole protector. In fact, the Russian government merely postponed Poland's annexation to a later date. It was with this in mind that Russia entered into a curious personal treaty with Prussia in the interests of "Golden Freedom" and the rights of the dissenters.

This treaty, hostile to Poland's political revival and often repeated in future years, hovered over the Republic practically without interruption until her dismemberment. Russia was even able to entice vanquished Sweden to join her in extending protection over Poland, at that time in the clutches of misrule. Russia put Turkey to sleep with the promise that she would enter Poland only when Leszczyński entered it with foreign troops (Dashkov's Treaty of Constantinople, 1720). Under the pretext that the terms of the covenant were not obeyed, Russia succeeded in seizing Livonia, a territory promised to Poland. She did not permit the evacuation of Courland, and yet, during the entire period of decline in Augustus' rule, she maintained in Warsaw the appearance of being the sole guardian of Poland's freedom.

Such a state of affairs was inconceivable during the days of Czarniecki or Sobieski. The Great Northern War, however, not only ruined Poland materially but brought on a period of moral decline and disintegration. Amid circumstances that were changeable because they were unforeseen, clear vision and a definite course of action were well-nigh impossible. Swedish terror, Russian deceit, Saxon intrigue tended to warp and break down character. Twenty years of sacrifice, mostly involuntary and devoid of any clear benefit to the Republic, tactical tricks at the expense of fundamental principles, all this brought on a spirit of scepticism, apathy and quietism. Now, finally, after the failure of Royal "Emancipation" ensued the proverbial "Saxon Times" with the slogan:

Under the rule of a Saxon King,  
Loosen the belt, eat and drink.

Tempers found vent in turbulent popular meetings and lawsuits; Diets that did not touch upon the topic of "Golden Freedom" failed to arouse interest. The chief points of interest were "Quarter Sessions" and acts of renewal of tribunals, contracts and legal forays. "Every-

body for himself", wrote one of the Rzewuskis, whose father was responsible for setting in precise form the chief canons of the Sarmatian system of government, i.e. free election, the dignity of hetman, the *liberum veto* and the squire's rights over the peasants.

Such tendencies and principles, in truth, could have vogue only in a country at a low cultural level. The Saxon King did "scribble" something about his intention to found four Academies in Poland, but in reality did not even open the Military Academy, which he promised in the *Pacta Conventa*. The Academies at Cracow, Wilno and Lwów, covered with the moss of scholasticism, he permitted to continue in their intellectual slumber. The Jesuit schools which in their day gave the youth a religious training in the spirit of Catholicism, now entered upon a period of formalism and stagnation. The "*Scholae Piarum*" imitated the methods of the Society, while education in parish schools fell far below medieval standards. The King, generous toward actresses, failed to arouse interest in literature or learning. The period of epics—of *Vespasian Kochowski* and *Wenceslas Potocki* gave way to an age of bombastic panegyrics; the age of sound political literature was followed by an age of pamphlets. If we pass over in silence, for the moment, the ponderous publication of *Andrew Zaluski's* poorly edited *Epistolae historico-familiares*, the prose of Augustus' Age is represented by outstanding works: *History of Poland*, 1696-1728, by an anonymous author (*Otwinowski?*), imbued with the spirit of honest but near-sighted conservatism; *New Athens*, by the cleric *Chmielowski*, a kind of popular encyclopaedia with a large dose of worthless nonsense; and finally *Poland's Crown*, by *Niesiecki*, an armorial written in 1728, a veritable monument of erudition somewhat tainted with flattery.

The literature of this period had little bearing on raising the standard of morals. They were not edifying, that is certain, and yet Poland's moral state was not unique.

In the realm of politics, little could be learned from the unkempt Saxons. Augustus the Strong, "esprit fort" in his own estimation, radiated cynicism, taught the ladies of the aristocracy debauchery, and the nobility drunkenness. "Quand Auguste buvait, la Pologne était ivre", said the French with perfect justice. Out of ten notorious and many-tongued mistresses of the King, only one belonged to the Polish race, and she was only half-Polish. As far as the general tone of morals is concerned, or the morals of the nation, of the family, or the materialistic motives, analogies to the waywardness rampant in Poland could be easily found both in the French court of the Regent and in England

as faithfully depicted by Hogarth. As far as dishonesty in politics is concerned, there was in Poland a smaller percentage of bribed creatures than in the Parliament of Walpole; at the elections, less gold was in evidence than in Sweden, and Poland was not the only country where magnate ministers received salaries from foreign powers. The source of political demoralization lay not in foreign bribes but in the remnant of the ancient monarchical prerogatives dating from the Piasts and Jagiellons and which was called "*justitia distributiva*". The King lost the power to command but retained the right to bribe.

These practices, jointly with ignorance and with the fatal turn of the Northern War, resulted in the fact that the period of 1717-33 is considered to be the "Dark Age" in Poland's annals. Besides the general wave of demoralization which swept over Europe, Poland had to encounter the wave of exaggerated fanaticism, which too, came in from the outside. After the 'Thirty Years' War, the "*odium theologicum*", in which England was prominent, pervaded the world. The persecution of the Catholics by the Puritans in England was re-echoed in France by the dragonades. The Huguenots, driven out of the country, carried with them a bitter hatred toward everything that was Catholic, and the open protection extended over his co-religionists by Charles XII irritated the clergy in Poland and all their agents. Hence, during the Tarnogród Confederation, both the court and the malcontents mutually accused each other of excessive indulgence to heresy, and both enacted a law forbidding the erection or the restoration of Protestant Churches. Judicial and administrative practice went farther in this direction. Dissenters were driven out of the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, public office and the courts. Their temples and estates were taken away from them, while their schools were closed. The zealots believed that they were ensuring national unity and moral integrity, whereas in reality, not so much the differences in creed but the immigration of the German colonists, convenient to the wealthy nobility, was responsible for undermining unity. The victims of persecution, under their leader and noted theologian Daniel Jabłoński, appealed to foreign powers for aid, stating that war on Catholicism was the common duty of all non-Catholics. Tsar Peter had long since intervened on behalf of the Disuniats, whom the Uniat clergy continued to deprive of churches and parishioners. Under Russia's protection, agents both clerical and lay, using Grzymułtowski's treaty as a pretext, were sowing the seeds of anti-Polish propaganda throughout White Ruthenia. Taking advantage of the invitation of the Protestants, Peter readily assumed the role of up-



holder of tolerance, though he mercilessly exterminated sectarians in his own country, and with his own hand murdered Uniats in Polock in 1705.

Under such circumstances Thorn (Toruń) became the scene of an event which stirred Europe and which was extremely unfortunate for Poland. Thorn was the chief centre of Lutheranism and of the German element in Poland. The majority of the German Protestant townsmen, in their constant feuds with the Jesuits, oppressed the Catholic minority. On 16 July 1724 the populace, aroused by a certain Jesuit student, raided the Jesuit College, desecrating the Sacred Host and the picture of the Blessed Virgin. The entire affair was discussed in the Senate. The King, who had scrupulously taught the Poles that it was not fitting to convert anyone by force, assumed an equivocal attitude towards it. Casting aside all interventions, including that of the Papal Nuncio, he endeavoured to refer the case to a special investigating Commission, consisting of men who were sure to present the facts in such a light that the severest penalty would follow. Accordingly, the guilty participants in the raid, nine in number, were sentenced to death and executed, while the Mayor Rösner met with the same fate, for not checking the mob at the proper time. The Church of the Virgin Mary was taken from the Protestants and given to the Bernardine Fathers (members of a branch of the Franciscan Order). In commemoration of this, the city was compelled to erect a special monument. Moreover, hereafter, one-half of all the members in the City Council must be Catholics. This decree, draconic in character, was unique in the annals of Poland. When, in 1641, fifteen Catholics who took part in the attack on the Protestant Church in Cracow were executed, no one regarded it as barbarism. The execution of Rösner and of the nine citizens of Thorn was branded as "Blutbad" by German pamphleteers and later German historians. Such "baths of blood", and ten times bloodier, had frequently taken place among the Western nations, but that had been fifty or a hundred years before. Poland indulged in cruelty at a period when the Occident had either exterminated religious minorities or entered upon a period of religious indifference. Hence the reason for the thunderous condemnation of the Thorn decree.

The English King, George I, issued a protest, for, as a Hanoverian, he endeavoured to gain the sympathy of the Northern Germans; the Prussian King, Frederick William I, did the same for a similar reason. Peter the Great was loudest in his protestations. The Poles, and especially the young vice-chancellor Michael Czartoryski, with his

characteristic calmness and dignity, easily answered the attacks or rather intrusions of rulers who were no shining examples of tolerance or humanitarianism in their respective domains. Augustus II externally supported his ministers, but confidentially explained to the world at large his inability to check the fanaticism of the Poles, as long as their liberal system of government remained in force. The death of the Great Tsar (8 February 1725), for all practical purposes, brought the question to a close.

The double political calculation of the Wettin King explains his duplicity in this affair. From the time of the "Silent Parliament", i.e. after the ultimate failure of his absolutist plans, the King was interested in one Polish question only—that of succession to the throne. To this end he was compelled to win the favour of a few foreign cabinets, and of a number of Polish citizens, especially the ardent Catholics. At this particular time (1724-6), prospects of Saxon succession were dim. Prince Frederick Augustus, an only son, born in Dresden 17 October 1696, was a pious Lutheran in his youth. Torn from the arms of his mother and sent in a company of Jesuits on a long journey through Catholic and Romanic lands (1711-17), as the result of his forced conversion, he lost both his creative individualism and his genial culture. Lovely and charming but apathetic, in striking contrast with some of the other successors to the thrones (Alexis Romanov and Frederick II Hohenzollern), Frederick Augustus was neither a cause of anxiety to his father, nor the hope of a bright future for the dynasty. Politics were of no interest to him and, in spite of Fleming's earnest advice, he showed no inclination to make himself acquainted with the Polish people or to master their language. His father foresaw that his indolent son could not succeed to the throne as he had done in 1697, or if he did, that he could scarcely shift for himself in such a boundless Republic. Nor could the father expect the support of Charles VI, whose niece Marie Josephine the Prince married on 20 August 1719, for by that marriage Augustus himself endeavoured to win a legal right to tear asunder the Hapsburg monarchy.

The year 1725 brought another complication, for on 5 September Louis XV espoused Maria Leszczyńska, the daughter of the exiled pretender, whom he practically ordered to renounce his claims to the Polish crown (France needed the Saxons against the Hapsburgs), but whose prospects at that particular time began to grow brighter. In 1726, Vienna formed an alliance with St Petersburg, the main purpose of which was to combat Saxon succession to the Polish throne. At

the same time the French embassy was arousing public interest in Warsaw in championing Leszczyński's cause.

In this very year, the question of Courland showed Augustus how odious the very name of Saxon was to Poland. The nobility of that Duchy (Courland) was disgusted with Russia's management of its domain and offered the throne to Maurice, a Saxon Prince, the son of Augustus and Aurora Königsmarck. Russia opposed this, but after the death of the Tsar-Reformer, she was in the hands of women and their favourites and hence was less capable of energetic action. The time was ripe for stemming the tide of Russian expansion in the direction of Courland. The Diet of Grodno (29 September-9 November) was adamant in abiding by the ancient agreements and enactments, which included the incorporation of Courland into the Republic, and therefore refused to support Maurice but ordered him to leave Mitau (Mitawa)—which he did, but only at the point of Russian bayonets.

Augustus the Strong, seriously ill at that time, must have ascertained that in thirty years he had failed to realize any of his life's dreams, but that he had offended Russia, France, and Austria (though he was forced to recognize the principle of the latter's integrity, contained in the "Pragmatic Sanction" of 1713). Only one court in the vicinity remained—the court of Berlin—which could be won at the well-known price. Augustus II entered into a very dangerous game of being on good terms with that court. In 1728, he became confidential with the Corporal-King and his philosophizing son at the Round Table of drinkers, the so-called "Société des antisobres", and later invited both to Mühlberg as his guests during the military review (June 1730). With the support of such an armed neighbour, the Wettin thought he might succeed in overcoming this fatal isolation at the critical moment.

Would it be possible to find a Polish citizen who would be willing to co-operate with him in such an unscrupulous game of politics? The Dresden Machiavelli did not succeed in schooling pupils and supporters whole-heartedly attached to his House. Of the senators, bishops and ministers who supported him in both phases of the War of the North some, like the hetmans, abandoned him and others were dying out, e.g. Przebendowski (d. 1726), Chomentowski (d. 1728), John Szernbek (d. 1731) and Constantine Szaniawski (d. 1732). Of the younger generation those who were his associates in the chase or at the round table, courtiers without ideals or character, prevailed. The gem of these was a career-hunter, the clever vice-chancellor,

John Lipski. The court, in truth, could rely on a few provincial magnates for help, e.g. the Radziwiłł Family in Lithuania, John Tarło and some of the Lubomirskis. During an interregnum, however, these would be compelled to follow the masses rather than try to bring this estranged mob to Saxon altars. Most of the holders of large estates belonged to the disgruntled, and leadership was vested in the hands of the Potockis. Twenty magnates of that name drew approximately nine million złotys from their estates and starosties in Red Ruthenia and the Ukraine, while the entire army budget of the State did not extend much beyond five millions. Theodore Potocki, Primate and Archbishop of Gniezno, in his early years supported Augustus; later, however, he secretly communicated with the opposition and the Russian Embassy. The second leader, Joseph, wojewoda (voivode) of Kiev (Kijów), fought for Leszczyński. Now both, together with Anthony Potocki, the nephew of the Primate and the best diplomat in the family, and all their henchmen reached an agreement with the French Ambassador Marquis de Monti in the matter of re-electing Leszczyński to the throne. With France so distant and the Prussian King so near, they decided to ask the support of Austria and Russia and thus to stifle the plans of Augustus' succession. Other ambitions than to rid Poland of Germans, this clan, it seems, never entertained, and with this proviso, of course, that they would rule during the reign of the weak Leszczyński.

For ten years, however, another family, hostile to the Potockis, had gained the support of the court. The Czartoryski princes, tracing their lineage back to Gedymin, Grand-Duke of Lithuania, thus far had given Poland but one Primate and a few mediocre Senators. Prince Casimir (d. 1741), Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania, the husband of Isabella Morstin, the renowned treasurer's and poet's daughter, introduced the spirit of the French salons into his palace. During the War of the North he vacillated between the Saxon Scylla and the Swedish Charybdis. Later, however, he showed his mettle by his bold *démarche* toward Russia. Most prominent among his children were Frederick Michael, who for a half-century was to be the Keeper of the Lithuanian Seal; Alexander Augustus, from 1731 the wojewoda of Ruthenia, and his sister Constantia. The young princes invited Stanislas Poniatowski, who was just returning from military service in Sweden (1719), to their home, gave him the ambitious Constantia in marriage, and found in this intelligent and enterprising brother-in-law an experienced leader whom they could trust much better than the foreign Fleming. Prince Michael, knowing the weaknesses not only of European

cabinets in general, and of the Polish government in particular, launched the maxim: "extremis malis, extrema remedia", gave the initiative, stepped forth, fought and conducted the election campaign. Prince Augustus, a man of poise and self-control, charming in his manners, and an excellent judge of character, after a long deliberation offered his "placet" and his money for the realization of their common decisions. He it was who, after the unsuccessful attempt to acquire the majorate of Ostróg (1722) to which he had a right, since he was the only Knight of Malta in Poland, amassed a huge fortune for his family by marrying the heiress to the Sieniawski estate, Sophia Denhof (1731). The Czartoryskis were called and had become "The Family" in much the same sense as Louis XIV was commonly referred to as "le roi", for he was King *par excellence*. The Family, as foreign diplomats later realized, formed a small Republic within a huge, loose State, small but well-disciplined and always conscious of its ultimate goal, which was not only power but the political and cultural regeneration of Poland. This regeneration would be effected by means of radical reform, not according to the French model, since no one in Poland wanted absolutism, but rather according to the mould of constitutional England.

Between the understanding of the Czartoryskis and the natural strength of the Potockis, there arose a struggle which continued for fifty years, until the first partition of the State. Other ancient families related to the Potockis, e.g. the Wiśnowieckis, Mniszechs, Sapiehas, Sanguszkos, Radziwiłłs, Jabłonowskis, for this very reason, as well as through ambition and selfish conservatism, attempted to stem the tide of "The Family's" growth. A less clear but a more independent attitude was assumed by the Tarło, Lubomirski and Zamoyski lines. At any rate, in spite of all future contention in the matter of orientation of the coat of arms of the Potockis and Czartoryskis, the latter showed greater readiness in sensing danger from the side of Russia. They, of all the magnates, felt most deeply the onus of Tsar Peter's mediation (1717). In the circle of nobles they first drew the line of demarcation between national independence and the sum total of rights and privileges enjoyed by individuals. In order that future hetmans might not be compelled to shed their blood in foreign service, the Czartoryskis decided to gain control of the army and appoint Poniatowski its commander-in-chief. The King counted on their support in a future interregnum; hence, as the hetmans died off, they concentrated command in the hands of the "regimentarians" of Poland, who were as devoted to him as formerly to the Tsar. It is doubtful whether they

served him unreservedly, for no upright Pole could be expected to take part in the partitioning schemes of Augustus II and the Hohenzollerns. The Potockis considered the army their hereditary domain, and by law the hetman's baton could be bestowed only during a regularly constituted Diet. Hence from 1729 onward, they disrupted every Parliament before the election of president. A strange phenomenon; masses of clients in the country served the Potockis, Radziwiłłs, Sapiehas, Sanguszkos, Ogińskis, Lubomirskis, Mniszechs, and Jabłonowskis, yet in Parliament after every cleverly conducted campaign, without abuse or bribe, the court and the Czartoryskis had a majority. No less strange was the fact that in their destructive work, the Potockis were aided by the majority of the aristocracy and were supported by Russian, French and Prussian diplomats, while the Czartoryskis were winning unto themselves the more intelligent element of the gentry class.

In 1732, the situation reached a crisis. Russian diplomacy, trying to hinder Augustus from settling down in Poland, and at the same time endeavouring to check France's operations, arranged the Treaty of Loewenwold with Austria which would exclude both the Saxon and Stanislas from the throne (1732). The Prussian King was likewise permitted to take part in this scheme, holding out Courland as bait, which Biron, the favourite of the Tsaritsa, wanted for himself—and all this in order that the King might not thwart their designs. In case of the King's *coup d'état*, Russian and Austrian troops, stationed at the border, at Potocki's command were ready to enter and stifle any such attempt.

The atmosphere of the Diet held in the autumn of 1732 was charged with the electricity of revolution. The presence of a large number of the royal guard in Warsaw prompted the thought that at this time the King would not allow the application of the veto and that he would confer four "truncheons" upon his loyal partisans. And yet the "veto" triumphed. The King convoked a special session of the Diet for January. During the elections, in a pamphlet of Stanislas Konarski, appeared the first bitter condemnation of the veto, together with that of Russia's pseudo-guarantee, entirely in keeping with the ideas of the Czartoryskis. The elections were more successful than the preceding ones. But at this time Augustus the Strong was more interested in other projects than the reform of the parliamentary system. On his journey from Dresden to Warsaw, at an inn in Crassen, he met the Prussian minister Grumbkow, and draining mighty tankards showed him on a map of Poland his dream of the manner in which its

future dismemberment should be effected. 'The drinking-bout did the King no good, for immediately after his arrival at Warsaw, he was confined to his bed, where after a week of excruciating pain and maledictions, he passed away.

His last words were supposed to be: "My whole life was an unceasing sin, God have mercy on me." It is difficult to warrant their authenticity, yet nothing would be more natural. This Alcibiades "*chatouilleux de la gloire*", as he described himself, wasted his extraordinary talents through a lack of moral strength. His egoism consumed his latent powers; in the blaze of fleeting passions, in the arms of such mistresses as Aurora Königsmarck, Countess Cosel, the Princess Bokum-Lubomirska and the Georgian Fatima, the energy of the politician and the ability of the ruler flickered away. He might have been Poland's Peter the Great, had he assumed as his life's programme the task of raising her to the western level of the Art of Politics. Unfortunately, he did not embrace any of life's glorious opportunities, nor did he serve any grand ideal. He lived for himself alone, and after death as a testament left Poland two fatal monuments: private interest and wicked manners in public life and, on the tables of diplomats, the plan of her future dismemberment.

## CHAPTER II

### LATER SAXON PERIOD, 1733-1763

**A** NATIONAL reaction, like that after John Casimir's reign but much stronger, burst out after Augustus the Strong's death. Russia and Austria had prepared for this moment a candidate from the world's other end—the Infant Dom Emanuel of Portugal; when he declined the offer these two powers looked for a "Piaśt", i.e. a native Pole from among the Polish aristocracy—a moral nonentity if possible. It soon became obvious that no Wiśniowiecki, nor any of the Lubomirskis could equal Stanislas Leszczyński in popularity. The poor beginnings of the exile's royal career were forgotten; he stood high in the nation's eyes, in spite of Imperial Courts and of German pressure, a symbol of independence, of the vital force of Poland, and at the same time a link of friendship with powerful France. The Marquis of Monti knew how to prop up this popularity with words and money, which, to tell the truth, was spent too freely on canvassing, too sparingly on armaments. This same Frenchman brought about the reconciliation of the Castilians and Catalanians of Poland, i.e. of the Potockis and the Czartoryskis: the primate's political leadership and Poniatowski's temporary command-in-chief were agreed upon. The convocation (April-May 1733), on Theodore Potocki's fiery appeal, passed a resolution excluding all foreign candidatures, and forced all its members to swear to this Act, prejudicial as it was to the liberty of the vote. At the same time, with a view to reinforcing the national spirit, the right of sitting in Parliament and in courts and the holding of offices were denied to the dissenters. If only national unity was kept up and the opposition was overawed, then Louis XV, with the aid of other Bourbon Kings and of Sweden and Turkey, would maintain his father-in-law on the throne, in spite of Vienna's threats. The houses of Potocki and Tarło hoped to win to their designs the old Russian boyar-aristocracy, kinsmen to Lithuanian and Ruthenian magnates, by pointing out to them the community of interests of the Slavs, oppressed everywhere by the German element. This attempt did not pass unheeded by Anna Ivanovna's German friends: it became obvious to them that no one but Frederick Augustus could thwart the unanimous election of Stanislas; in the course of July the Elector of Saxony secured by



treaties the support of Austria and Russia; cajoling the former by recognizing the Pragmatic Sanction once again, the latter by promising to Biron Courland as a fief. The Saxon agents succeeded here and there in splitting the unanimity of country voters, but did not greatly change the final result.

Polish patriots, however, overestimated the readiness of France to take an active part, and Louis XV's family attachment to his father-in-law. Cardinal Fleury, the King's tutor and Prime Minister, despised Leszczyński and would prefer to avoid war. It was his doing that Stanislas, instead of landing triumphantly with a squadron at Danzig, had to cross Germany by stealth, accompanied only by the Ukrainian colonel Orlik. He never betrayed his identity until he reached Warsaw and suddenly appeared at a solemn service in the cathedral. The crowd raved with enthusiasm, the isolated opponents were silenced; the other party sought refuge in Praga to meet the Russian army which came from Lithuania under Field-Marshal Lascy. On 12 September, Potocki proclaimed Stanislas King of Poland. There was time enough to sign the poll (about 12,000 votes) and to draw up the *pacta conventa*. In the meanwhile a Russian army of 30,000 was marching from the East. Apprised of its approach, Leszczyński dared not go to Kamieniec, since the Turks could not be trusted, but went to Danzig, where, he hoped, he could more easily in the hour of need obtain French and Swedish relief forces. In Warsaw people and troops vented their anger by cannonading the palaces of the Saxon mission and of the two Imperial embassies. This, however, did not frighten the Russians, who arrived at Praga and there performed the comedy of the election of Augustus III. The votes were given chiefly by the Lithuanian lords: Michael Wiśniowiecki, Paul Sanguszko, the Radziwiłłs, the Sapiehas, not so much for love of the Saxon King but rather from anxiety for their landed estates on Poland's eastern borders. Augustus III estimated one thousand signatures as sufficient to legitimate his claims. Meeting with no hindrances, he arrived at Cracow in January 1734. Instead of summoning a Diet, he held a Confederation Council with Anthony Poniński, the leader of the pro-Saxon Confederation as chairman—and then returned to his safe Dresden.

The insults and outrages of Austria and Russia were answered by the Bourbons with a war. It is needless to say that the Kings of Spain, of Naples and of Sardinia as well as Louis XV had in view in the first place their own possible gains in Italy and (in the case of Louis XV) also in Rhineland. This was to be the revenge for the

tearing in pieces of the Spanish monarchy. The French attack on the Austrian forces in Lombardy was so violent that Augustus III could count only on his own resources and on Russian help. The Russian forces could only be kept in check by the prompt counter-action of Sweden and of Turkey. The latter saw quite clearly, that what occurred was the case foreseen in the treaties of 1711-13, but not in that of 1720, that this was no armed irruption of Leszczyński's, but a most free and legal election. As however the Ottoman's main forces were engaged in war against the Persian monarch Tahmas Kuli Khan, the Sultan shrank from unchaining the Khan of Tartary before the war in Mesopotamia came to an end. Swedish affairs were directed in reality by Leszczyński's former "kingmaker", Chancellor Arwid Horn. A much too cautious politician, he was not certain of England's attitude to Russia, and cooled down France's more zealous adherents for so long that all opportunity of revenge for Poltava was irrevocably lost.

In this way Poland, militarily and politically disorganized as she was, had to repel with her own resources a Russian and a Saxon invasion. It was done by primitive confederacies, of which John and Adam Tarło, two patriots from Little Poland, were the life and soul. Supported very feebly by the Potockis, they could not keep Cracow, the coronation place, in Polish hands, nor win back Warsaw, nor check fresh Russian troops approaching through Lithuania and Volhynia. The main forces, first under Lascy's command, then Münnich's, besieged Stanislas in Danzig (January 1734), where others, such as the primate, Monti, and the chiefs of "the Family" also took refuge. Never did this chief centre of Vistula trade show its Polish patriotism better than at that time. Whatever their motives: apprehension of the Saxon dynast's fiscal policy, or maybe the regard for the trade relations with France and her allies, the Danzig citizens defended Leszczyński's rights better than the Poles themselves. The blockade, the bombardment, the assaults never weakened their energies as long as there was a hope of relief. But John Tarło was defeated before he could reach Danzig, and the only help conveyed by sea, except a small group of Swedish volunteers, were 2000 soldiers led by an heroic poet, Count Plélo, French ambassador in Copenhagen, who, to save his king from shame, turned back the retreating squadron, landed at Weichselmünde and fell in an assault on Münnich's ramparts (27 May). In this situation Leszczyński, to save the town and himself, left Danzig by stealth at night for Marienwerder and Königsberg and resided there, as guest, and partly as hostage, in the castle of Frederick

William I. Danzig surrendered (28 June), the senators, taken prisoners, signed the Act of Acknowledgment of Augustus, except the primate, who preferred imprisonment to such humiliation (July 1734).

This was not, however, the end of the War of the Polish Succession. Leszczyński, urged by the court of Versailles, summoned on 20 August his people to further self-defence. He still relied on Sweden and on Turkey—and partly on the King of Prussia, who, keeping in his hands the precious pledge, was offering his help in return for a tract of Polish territory. On 5 November a considerable confederation was formed at Dzików near Sandomierz with Adam Tarło as political leader. A similar league was active in Lithuania. Since April, Leszczyński had dreamed of an armed expedition to Saxony, following in the footsteps of Charles XII, and of a rising of Czechs, Silesians, Hungarians and Cossacks against the German oppressors. But by this time even the Poles had lost their confidence in his good star. Not only the Czartoryskis but even the Hetman Potocki had little by little become reconciled to accomplished facts. The partisan risings were quenched first in Western Poland then in Lithuania, in the deep forests of Mazovia and in the vicinity of Kamieniec. The diplomats alone had still something to say about Poland's fate. Of several embassies, the creation of which was planned by the confederation of Dzików, one only could boast of a seemingly successful issue, namely George Ożarowski's mission in Paris. Stanislas and his friends long believed that Europe would not recognize the illegal events of 1733, but that she would guarantee by treaties the independence of Poland. With this end in view, Ożarowski signed on 28 September a friendship pact with France, full of vague and high-flown promises. Cardinal Fleury did not consider himself much bound by this stipulation; he was acquainted with the point of view of the sea-powers, whose aim was to obtain peace at the cost of Leszczyński's kingship, and he feared the jealousy of the English, if the war lasted longer. He tried even to persuade St Petersburg that Stanislas would make a better neighbour than the rich Saxon prince. When this failed, he concluded a preliminary peace pact with the Emperor at the first opportunity, on 3 October 1735 in Vienna. Leszczyński as titular king was given the Duchy of Lorraine for life. In half a year, after long bargaining, the remaining members of the Confederation of Dzików recognized Augustus III, and the Pacification Parliament (June-July 1736) ended these three stormy years. It would seem that Poland had suffered no loss in this war. Courland, indeed, was to be given by Augustus to Biron as a fief (8 July 1737), but this territory might easily have

been lost to Prussia. In reality, however, Poland lost the freedom of choosing her own king, and became dependent on Russia. It was a gain, that for the first time the bulk of the nation understood the meaning of political and constitutional independence at the very moment when they had lost it. The word "independence", indeed, was then used, for the first time in Polish political literature by Stanislas Konarski.

Polish politicians were henceforth to disagree as to the ways and means of saving their country. Internal regeneration was the Czartoryskis' aim; while the Potockis strove to shake the foreign yoke by armed force. The new King accepted neither plan of action. Unlike his father, who sacrificed everything to his fancies, Augustus III thought in the first place of his duties as Saxon Elector and as father of a numerous brood of Wettins. His mental development had stopped short many years before; after his coming of age it seemed rather to go back than forward. His interests never went beyond sensual pleasures—he was indifferent to everything else except perhaps the plastic arts. Hunting, banqueting, opera and low jesters filled his time. Of the first twenty years of his reign he spent in Poland no more than two. He had promised to ask the advice of his constitutional counsellors, the resident senators, but he gave ear only to his favourites, who relieved him from all thinking and acting. The first of them, Joseph Alexander Sułkowski, Master of the Hunt and companion of the King's youthful revels, inclined towards France and kept the Czartoryskis away from the King. As, however, he did not excel either in hard work or in tact, he lost the King's good graces in the spring of 1738 and left for Rydzyna (in Great Poland) which he had bought from Leszczyński. The second, Henry Brühl, a native of Thuringia, had won Augustus II's confidence soon after Fleming's death. From Augustus III he obtained one by one the management of all departments of Saxon administration, including diplomacy, finance and war. An excellent courtier, he knew his master's weak points, knew how to please him and to relieve him of his duties. It soon became known in Poland that the best way to the king's good graces lay through the favourite's cabinet. The Saxon Prime Minister soon became the non-constitutional but omnipotent leader of Polish affairs. In Augustus the Strong's time Polish legations had become rare in Europe. Now they became an exception and dealt only with East European affairs. All others were settled by Saxon diplomacy. In order to subjugate Poland gently and imperceptibly, there was no need for Augustus and Brühl to employ an armed force (happily

enough, since they were not allowed to keep more than a standing guard of 1200 men). Their designs could be achieved by turning to their purpose the influence of the magnates depending on the Saxon court and by making use of vacancies and great starosties as an *ultima ratio*. Russia's help was sought, when the private letters opened and examined in the Black Chamber told of discontent and of threatening rebellion.

For thirty years Poland was to remain in the hands of the Saxon manager. This situation, pernicious as it was, had on the other hand one good by-effect. Under Augustus II independent Polish thought had been paralysed out of consideration for the too-arbitrary monarch. This restraint is best illustrated by the fact that Karwicky never published his republican treatise and that Szczuka as a writer had to conceal his identity under a pen-name. Since, however, the country was ruled by a cipher and a parasite, the Poles were compelled to think more about themselves. The years 1732-50 were marked by a certain rise of spirits and of a critical attitude. At that time Konarski's wise ideas were first made public and he began to publish the *Volumina Legum*. At that time Leszczyński on foreign soil wrote his *Free Voice to Make Freedom Safe* (1733-7, published 1749); Godfried Lengnich, a Danzig jurist, published a systematic outline of *Ius Publicum Regni Poloniae* (1742-6). Stanislas Poniatowski advised his countrymen to follow in Western Europe's footsteps, and summoned them to save their country by great sacrifice (1744). Karwicky's work was being prepared for the press; Stanislas Garczyński gave a critical survey of Polish economy (1751). All this, it should be observed, happened when others like the Czartoryskis, Andrew Stanislas Załuski, the bishop and Nicholas Podoski, Palatine of Płock, were pleading at the Diet for the reform of the Polish Constitution, avoiding, however, any violent measures. Their attempt to win Brühl to their purpose was for a long time thwarted by the efforts of the Saxon creatures, particularly of those who attributed to their own merit the King's election in 1733 and tried to turn it to their profit. The influence of "the Family" at the court lasted for ten years (1743-52). Their counsels becoming onerous to Brühl, they lost their power, and Brühl began to sell vacancies right and left to the highest bidder. In this situation Brühl's son-in-law and kinsman of the Potockis George Mnischev rose to chief importance at the Saxon court, devoted to its interests and to his own career with all his soul.

Polish home affairs seemed peaceful and smooth to the outside observer. The misfortunes of 1733 being forgotten, the Polish gentry

lived from day to day, from one Dietine to another, from one session of the Tribunal to another. Diets were convoked every two years, and dismissed without passing any resolutions. Great fortunes were accumulated by marriage and divided again by succession. But under the quiet surface conspiracies were gathering head among the higher nobility, and the Russian, Prussian and French intrigues were sapping public life. The Republic carried on no war at that time, but every war in her neighbourhood shook her to the foundations, and Virgil's "proximus Ucalegon" was never absent from political leaders' rhetoric.

The roaring of cannon was first heard from the south. At the very moment of the pacification of Europe (autumn 1735), Turkey, alarmed by the violence done to Poland by the Tsar's obvious policy of expansion eastwards and his designs upon the Black Sea borders, took up arms. Münnich's and Lascy's rapid progress in the Crimea awakened Austria's envy. She offered her services as mediator, but as soon as this proposal was declined by the Porte at the congress at Niemirow, she took Russia's part. Quite unexpectedly the dishonest mediators were beaten several times by the Turkish army drilled by the Frenchman, Bonneval. Only then Vienna remembered Poland and endeavoured, with the help of the Pope, to persuade Augustus to renew as king and elector Sobieski's league with the Emperor. It was true that the times had changed; Poland was menaced no more by Islam but by her Protestant and Orthodox neighbours. In return for Poland's accession, Augustus III could have demanded permission to carry out reforms. The Saxons, however, never thought of that. The Czartoryskis saw the opportunity, and, choking their rage aroused by Münnich's violation of the Polish frontiers (1738), bargained with the Russian ambassador for the augmentation of the army. The Potockis did not lend their support to these efforts. They believed, as did other remnants of the Dzików confederation, that the moment was proper to drive the Saxons away from Poland. The Hetman, Joseph Potocki, received the Turkish and the Swedish emissaries, and sent a messenger to Stambul, asking the vizier for money and arms for the confederation. Leszczyński was summoned to claim the throne, Stockholm and Berlin were begged to help. The revolt was to burst out in the rear of the Russian army, when it should reach Moldavia. The more considerate element, the Czartoryskis, the Tarkos, the Rzewuskis threw cold water on the impatience of the border gentry, and Münnich's victory over the Turks (at Stavutchany on 28 August 1739) gave a heavy blow to the movement. Potocki could only put up his sword and apologize to Russia; Poland got no satis-

faction for the violation of her frontiers, but the Tsarina's promise, some time later, never to do it again. What was worse, the Turks, discouraged by her weak attitude, did not renew in the peace with Russia at Belgrade the article concerning the territorial integrity of Poland.

This was, as it were, a prelude. The great game involving Poland's vital destiny did not begin till Frederick II came to the throne. The forty-six years of his reign formed one continuous murderous attempt upon Poland's moral and material existence, executed with the aid of every possible means, including diplomacy and war, intrigue and corruption, threats and counsels, robbery and forgery. Since the time of her troubles with the Teutonic Knights, Sarmatia never had such a neighbour. In 1731 the Crown Prince Frederick had formulated his plan of capturing Polish Prussia. In 1735 he met the Polish emigrants in Königsberg and played on their simple-heartedness. In 1740 he surprised the Senate by arranging the ceremony of rendering homage in such a hurry that the Polish delegation had no time to come. He lost no time in starting the mole's work in the Warsaw Diet, pretending to act as protector of the liberties of the gentry. This policy he pursued with masterly skill until the end. More than one senator saw through the "Anti-Machiavelli" designs and warned the court against them. Poniatowski, sent to Paris with a mission (1741), prophesied that this sovereign would cause grave trouble to both France and Poland. Brühl's foresight, however, did not reach far. When in 1741 France and Bavaria assaulted Maria Theresa, with Prussian help and with Russia's apparent approval, Brühl led his King into a military alliance with Frederick. As a result, Saxony not only got neither the strip of Silesian territory that would join the Electorate with the Republic, nor the promised Moravia, but had to suffer grave military losses. In the meanwhile Polish affairs were left to their own good or bad luck; the majority of Poles sympathized with the Empress Queen, but there was also a number of intransigent malcontents, who were contriving a new confederation with the pretended purpose of effecting the augmentation of the Polish army, although they frustrated all efforts in the same direction at the Diet. Some of them, like Potocki, the Hetman, counted on Prussia's support—others, like Peter Sapieha and Anthony Potocki were ready to start guerilla warfare as a diversion in favour of Sweden, which, after having lost two excellent opportunities, chose the worst moment for settling her account with Russia, and consequently suffered one defeat after another (1741-3).

It was only after the Breslau-Berlin Peace Treaty (June-July 1742), when almost the whole of Silesia came into the Hohenzollern's hands, that this chaos began to take on a more rational shape. Brühl swore vengeance on Prussia, and, with this aim in view, prepared two alliances: with Austria (January 1743) and with Russia (February 1744). The recent experiences taught him that it was too difficult at once to combat Prussia and to favour in Poland such incurable Prussophiles as the Potockis turned out to be. It was much better to rely on the Family, who were well disposed and also ready to collaborate with the Imperial Court. This *rapprochement* was advocated by British diplomacy, endeavouring to keep in check France's ally—Prussia. Turkey ceased to hamper it, since the Potockis were compromised in her eyes for a long time. When the second Silesian war broke out (August 1744)—the Czartoryskis had Russia's promise not to hinder financial reforms, nor the increase of the army. The latter was a most popular programme throughout the country, and even the Potockis promised the King to support it in the Diet. The fresh Polish regiments would be of great use to Saxony as well as to Austria and to Russia against Frederick. Poland might have returned to the battlefield as an indispensable and almost decisive force, and that in good, trustworthy company. Frederick therefore did not spare his ducats nor did Louis XV his louis-d'or. The Grodno Diet (5 October-19 November) became the scene of a tragic scandal; treason and corruption were discovered but the traitors were suffered to escape for want of unanimity. The assembly died a natural death—its members went home with hearts swollen with bitterness.

It became obvious in the course of time that to augment the army was not a simple matter, in spite of its popularity. Supposing even that in Poland as in England the parliamentary majority ruled, it was not easy to bring its different and often contrary interests to a compromise. The Ruthenian provinces exclaimed against the levelling of their taxes with those of Great Poland, arguing that they had to defend themselves against the Ukrainian "haydamaks". The Potockis consented to the new troops, provided that the command-in-chief should remain with the head of their clan, the old Hetman—a decrepit intriguer. As the times of heavy taxation were long forgotten by the gentry, it would not have been difficult for some foreign power, in this case Prussia, to undermine the efforts of the reforming party. In the closing period of the Silesian wars, Augustus III was again hesitating as to the course to take; now coveting the Imperial Crown after Charles VII Wittelsbach (1745), now lured by the French sub-



sidies for the Saxon army (a treaty of 21 April 1746), and he gave his daughter in marriage to the Dauphin (1747). This union was considered in Dresden as the surest way to secure not only the goodwill of France, but also the sincere support of her adherents. In fact the Minister, the Marquis d'Argenson, was in favour of such loyal policy, but as soon as he met with the opposition of Frederick the Great he returned to the former destructive methods. Louis XV had one more reason to pursue them, since the time when, counselled by certain Freemason circles, he opened an intrigue against his own Ministers of State, known as the "*Secret du Roi*". Its main purpose was then to establish on the Polish throne the Prince de Conti, the grandson of the candidate of 1697. In these circumstances the Czartoryskis endeavoured to make the reforms independent of foreign policy: they tried to come to an agreement with John Tarlo, with the Radziwiłls and even with the Potockis. This last family was preparing under the leadership of the clever and open-minded Anthony, Palatine of Belz, a man of no scruples, a subversive confederation, assuring at the same time the court of Dresden of their most devoted loyalty. The so-called republicans hoped that such commotion would draw great crowds, those crowds which they failed to heat up when canvassing before the elections. It was a sad but characteristic feature: the same men who assured Augustus III of their zeal and talked to the ignorant gentry of the sacred *liberum veto*—the same men implored France to send Charles Edward Stuart to Poland, and asserted confidently that his intention was to imitate the English Constitution. The Potockis promised to support the plans of reform at the 1746 Diet; in return for which the Marshal's (Speaker's) staff was entrusted to the hands of Anthony Lubomirski. Then, with the aid of their creatures, they frustrated all efforts of the sitting. In 1748, after the Russian troops had marched twice across Lithuania and Poland—on their way to Germany and back—the Potockis made no more promises. The Family had done its best to pass, under the name of Economic Committee, a resolution enabling the Government to calculate and to prepare men and means in case of an emergency—and again this stone of Sisyphus was let down upon their heads by the underlings of the Franco-Prussian agency.

It was a common belief that the Family was at that time at the summit of their power. After Joseph Potocki's death (1751), they were to get for Stanislas Poniatowski the castellanship of Cracow (which meant the holding of the first place in the Senate) and for his son-in-law, John Clemens Branicki, they got the baton of Great

Hetman of Poland. Prince Augustus Czartoryski told the French Minister that he and his whole house would take French colours, if only Louis XV would stop supporting Prussia and make friends with Russia. In fact a crisis detrimental both to the Family and to Poland was approaching. Brühl, however, began to doubt the Czartoryskis. He was pleased when they obtained for him in the Tribunal a decree equivalent to a statement (of dubious value) proving his descent from the Ocieskis, an old gentle family, but he was offended by Casimir Poniatowski's refusal to accept his daughter Amelia in marriage. About this time the attitude of the Imperial Courts towards Poland changed for the worse. It is true that in their Alliance of 1746—directed chiefly against the Turks—a place was reserved for Poland, but at the Diet of 1748 the Russian Minister Bestuzheff made preparations to "explode" the debates, and hearkened to Hetman Michael Radziwiłł's warnings about Czartoryski's intention to annul the *liberum veto*. Maria Theresa, when asked what she thought of this reform, disapproved of it, as bad and dangerous. Just after this objectionable decree in Brühl's favour in the High Courts of Justice (Trybunały Koronne), the Potockis' party began to prevail. In 1749 hot strife took place between the two parties, who mutually questioned the election of the judges belonging to the other party. As the result the necessary quorum failed, and the Courts of Appeal became inactive (except in Lithuania). As soon as Augustus III perceived the general indignation, he came to Poland, and convoked a Diet which had to deal exclusively with the reform of jurisdiction (August 1750). The Czartoryskis, fighting in the name of that popular reform, won again at the polls. In case the debate should be broken up, they were determined to form a confederation. The worthy Wenceslas Rzewuski was designated for its head. There followed bargains and promises from the Potockis' side—and a new challenging Veto under the pretext that an individual who fictitiously resigned his seat in the Senate for this very purpose was a candidate for the Speaker's truncheon. The plan of forming a confederation failed for the simple reason that no foreign power wished it; besides, the army was in Potocki's hands, and the Prussian envoy dropped a hint of his master's possible military intervention.

So many efforts without success, so much suicidal damage done and unpunished, uncondemned even apparently by public opinion, must drive weaker people to despair. The Czartoryskis did not recoil. In their opinion the court should have boycotted the damage-doers and should have raised to offices and rank only those who wished to

work positively. No statesman, it seemed, could think about any other contrivance at a time when all organs of power were impotent. But exactly such a system of personal policy was indicted by the pretended "republicans" as the very height of injustice. They protested that one-twentieth part of the Republic (the Family formed one-twentieth of the aristocracy) should not impose despotically its will on the rest. And there was somebody who succeeded in tearing Brühl away from the Czartoryskis' schemes. This was George Mnischev, the husband of Amelia Brühl (formerly rejected by C. Poniatowski). He promised his father-in-law to conciliate the Potockis and their kin, if only vacancies were filled up in an equal ratio. The court's adherents, thus increased in number, would form a sufficient party to carry the only matter of real importance to the Saxon dynasty—the Bill of Succession.

Augustus III had by his ugly wife five sons and five daughters, for all of whom he succeeded in finding either good positions or ample dowries. It was not yet clear who should have Poland, since the eldest son Frederick Christian was a valetudinarian. About 1750-1 the Saxon court began to consider the question of succession, all the more since Conti's schemes were no secret. Brühl enjoyed great credit with the Russian Chancellor, Alexis Bestuzheff, but he preferred to be very careful when speaking with Vienna, the Loewenwold Treaty (1732) being still fresh in his mind. First of all, then, after the subsidiary treaty with France had expired, he brought his master on similar terms into the English system. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams who negotiated this treaty (13 September 1751) had to win over St Petersburg to the cause of the Saxon succession in Poland, after which St Petersburg was to bring in Vienna. But Maria Theresa opposed these plans with strange caution, under the pretext that Prussia would be provoked. In fact the Empress Queen, though not so long ago she was threatened herself with partition, stood for driving Poland into such a state of weakness, that in the near future she would become an easy prey to her neighbours. This is why Brühl failed to prepare a common action on behalf of the Wettin dynasty. The Czartoryskis promised support—but the Potockis were still thinking about Conti. The court lacked both foreign approval and courage to enforce a fundamental parliamentary reform which could pave the way for the abolition of free election and the designation of a successor to the throne. Thus the Grodno Diet, devoid of a programme and of spirit, again fell a victim to the Potockis' opposition, backed by the Jews and by Prussia and directed by the skilful hand of the new French ambassador, Count de Broglie.

A new and heavy disappointment to the Czartoryskis was brought about by Hetman Branicki's sudden *volte-face*. This magnate, who long ago had espoused Saxony's and Russia's interests, now accepted out of vanity the leadership of "the patriots" and used his ascendancy over the army against the policy of the Family. Count de Broglie hoped equally to bring over even the King himself to the side of France and the Potockis. Augustus, however, knew that he could not govern Poland without Russia's friendly support, and that after a breach with Russia, Saxony would lose her help against the Prussian neighbour.

In the meanwhile Mniszech was bringing his task to an end. The co-ordination of the domestic policy with the foreign was drawing to a close. The court gave up all reforms—even the parliamentary, indispensable to the dynasty. Rank and office were given to all who bowed to Mniszech and paid Brühl. The Czartoryskis, threatened with isolation, endeavoured to rescue their lost power by forming a coalition of magnates against Mniszech. The majorate of Ostróg served as a means to this end. As we know, the legal heirs to this immense fortune had died out long ago and the only claimant entitled to succession, Augustus Czartoryski, was not allowed to take the estate into his hands (1722). Now, in 1753, the Family came to an agreement with Janusz Sanguszko, the debonair usurper of the estate. By this agreement the landed property was to be given over to his creditors, of whom the Lubomirskis formed the main part. The Czartoryskis hoped to divide in this manner the antagonistic camp of the aristocracy—but they were deceived. Hetman Branicki did not suffer the tearing to pieces of an estate which was bound to maintain 600 men in defence of Ruthenia. In spite of the poor quality of this militia, and notwithstanding that the future owners duly promised to maintain it, the gentry raised an outcry against the lawlessness of the whole proceeding. The outcry resounded at the Diet, with such force that the Czartoryskis thought it necessary for the first time to break up the debate. The King entrusted the management of the estate to his commissioners, and his favours were bestowed on the triumphant republicans. After this heavy blow, the Czartoryskis appealed to the protection of England and of Russia. Their great friend, Williams, tried to keep up their spirit. It was he, who brought the young "stolnik" (steward) of Lithuania, Stanislas Poniatowski, to St Petersburg in the summer of 1755, and introduced him into the alcove of the Grand Duchess, Catherine. Both attempted to restore through the Empress Elizabeth's mediation the former ascendancy

of the Czartoryskis at the court of Augustus. Bruhl eluded the intercession, but on the other hand he did not listen to the suggestions of the French party and its spokesman, Count de Broglie.

This was the moment when George II negotiated through Williams a subsidy treaty with Russia to secure his Hanoverian possessions. Fifty-five thousand Russians were to march once more across the neutral Polish territories. Branicki and the patriots considered themselves bound in honour to prevent any further violation of the Polish frontiers, such as had occurred in the years 1738-9 and in 1748. France was ready to give one million and a half livres for an anti-Russian confederation. Branicki delivered pompous speeches, and alarmed Turkey, but did simply nothing to arm the future confederates. It turned out that the patriots heartily agreed in their hatred towards the Czartoryskis—but when positive effort was required, a small part only remained faithful to their former slogan. The rest preferred to serve the interests of the Wettin dynasty.

The great change in international affairs which occurred shortly before the Seven Years' War, known as the "Reversal of alliances", served to deepen the chaos. The patriots learned in the summer of 1756 that their friend France had joined hands with their oppressors, Russia and Austria, while the Czartoryskis saw Benoît, the Prussian, a despised firebrand and poisoner, at the side of their English friend, Lord Stormont. Count de Broglie, compromised as he was, knew not how to present to the parties the future march of the Russian troops across Poland, since in August 1756 Frederick broke into Saxony and shut up Augustus in the camp at Pirna, making it impossible for him to open a Diet at Warsaw. Of course, after the surrender of Pirna, Augustus would have had no difficulties in convoking an extraordinary session. It is clear when looking back through the perspective of the ages that it was in the interest of Poland to accede to the great coalition of Versailles, with France, Austria and Russia against England and Prussia, and that this was a much better moment than the year 1744 for the settling of accounts with her worst neighbour, and—if not for reconquering East Prussia—at any rate for making Frederick harmless for some time. Prussia's defeat, accomplished even without Poland's share in the action, would be for her a great success. But who would lead Poles to defend the Saxon Elector outraged in his own country? Who would organize the campaign against Prussia? Certainly not Prussia's friends and the King's worst enemies and his dethroners *in spe*—the Potockis. Thus, owing to the exuberant party spirit and discord of the years

1752-4, Poland was not able to play any part in the Seven Years' War. While cannons and muskets were roaring in Silesia, in Saxony, in Brandenburg and in Westphalia, on the seas and in the colonies, the only noises in Poland were the quarrels at the Dietines (not even at the Diet) and in Tribunals. It was in these years 1755-7 exactly that Mnuszech did everything in his power to destroy the influence wielded over Lithuania by the Lord Chancellor, Czartoryski. He was assisted by the Radziwiłłs: Michael, the Hetman, and Charles, his son, the scandalous Charles known as "Panie Kochanku". They did not succeed. Augustus III, after the loss of Saxony, considered it more prudent to comply with the wishes of Russia: both of the Tsarina Elizabeth, and of her successor to the throne—Catherine. And so in autumn 1756 he sent to St Petersburg the young Stanislas Poniatowski as Saxon envoy. Poniatowski's task was to quicken the advance of Russian troops to East Prussia, whose presence could not fail to impress the Lithuanian gentry in a manner favourable to the Family. It is true that the intrigue was a very complicated one, since the Young Court of Peter and Catherine was engaged in an underhand plot with Williams, and it was not its wish that Frederick should be defeated. It is known that the Russian Commander-in-Chief, Apraxin, retreated from East Prussia after the victory of Grossjägerndorf (1757), but at this moment France, beaten at Rossbach, had still less to say in Warsaw than her Russian allies. When de Broglie, after his quarrels with Brühl, left Poland in February 1758, his anti-Russian programme and his camp, rallied around Branicki, were in poor case.

From spring 1757 until the end of this reign, the Russian troops never left Polish territories. Poland's neutrality became sheer fiction. The Russians filled up their stores with corn from Lithuania and from Great Poland—at first giving a good price, then worse and worse and tardy in their payments. The court took care only of the payment of its own indemnities as well as those of Saxony. Now and then it touched, cautiously but without success, the question of Polish Succession. Polish statesmen (there could be no question of a government, since every minister acted separately) did not even try to acquaint the powers officially with Polish wishes and expectations in case of Prussia's overthrow (though there existed a list of such claims, prepared by Konarski). Branicki, spurred on by the same Konarski, asked France to help Poland during the pacification to abolish the Free Veto. But at that time the "Secret du Roi" was of no importance, and the policy of the French Cabinet, particularly since Choiseul held sway (at the close of 1758) was interested only in overthrowing

Prussia and England. France did not want to spoil the game in the East, by supporting Polish reasonable claims. The Poles, on the other hand, particularly those who gathered at the palace of Hetman Branicki in Białystok, only sighed and prayed that first Russia should be beaten by Prussia and then the latter by France. The fortunes of war took just the contrary course. In 1758 the Russians occupied Königsberg and seized the towns of Royal Prussia, Danzig alone excepted. Then they settled in Great Poland, whence they conducted a victorious campaign to Kunersdorf. In 1760 they even entered Berlin. The Prussians broke into Great Poland to meet this offensive in the spring and in the summer of 1759. During one of these inroads, in March, they carried off Sułkowski as the purveyor of the Russian army: in 1761 they invaded Poznań for the second time. Such violations of the Polish territory brought the greatest shame to Branicki, the guardian of all frontiers. The old Hetman blamed Brühl for all misdoings, and assailed him publicly by handing to the King, in April 1758, a violent memorial. Augustus of course did not believe a word of it, and the favourite wreaked his revenge by suppressing the administration of Ostróg—the very thing that the Czartoryskis most heartily desired.

It seemed that the Family would recover its power, and that Polish policy would gain a fixed direction. The trouble was that the Czartoryskis themselves lost their clearness of mind as to their future course in politics. At some time, amid the love scenes between Poniatowski and Catherine in the Northern capital, a plan was conceived of ending the Saxon reign in Poland—and of placing on the throne a member of the Czartoryski family, most likely the Stolnik of Lithuania. When in the spring of 1758 Prince Charles, Augustus' third son, came to St Petersburg to secure for himself the Duchy of Courland (vacant *de facto* since Biron's disgrace and banishment in 1740), he found the love-affair at the Young Court gone so far that he used all his influence to convince his father of the necessity of recalling Poniatowski. The latter returned to Warsaw with a wounded heart, a blazing ambition and a dogged determination to take revenge. Prince Charles' exertions to get Courland proved successful, the ground being prepared beforehand in Mitau and in Poland by Chancellor Małachowski. At this time, as in 1726, the Poles, who understood that thus the Russian expansion would be checked, approved of the installation of a prince of Saxon blood. Therefore Branicki, having satisfied his pride by "exploding" a Diet (October 1758), made friends again with Brühl and supported the cause of the Prince. The Czartoryskis on the contrary, objected in the Senate, seemingly on the ground of Biron's

inalienable rights—in reality in order not to facilitate for the Saxons the way to the Polish throne.

From this time on, all links between the Czartoryskis and the court were broken. Mniszech, at the summit of his ambitions, became the head of a party which was neither pro-French nor pro-Russian, neither conservative nor radical, but most obedient and ready to serve. Henceforth—said Bruhl—everything should depend on His Majesty's and on his own good graces. "Everything" meant in Mniszech's eyes enjoying one's time, making a fortune and annoying his enemies. Other ambition this conceited megalomaniac had none. A reliable authority states that during the Seven Years' War the plan of parliamentary reform was brought before Augustus, who, out of "kindness" and to spare Poland internal strife, rejected all initiative. Mniszech and his party friends: Cajetan Sołtyk, the Bishop of Cracow, the Potockis, the Krasińskis, the Radziwiłłs, did however succeed in fighting battles and winning victories of a minor order. The marshal of the court wanted first of all to rid himself of his meritorious rival, John Małachowski, and to this end he provoked a lawsuit in the matter of a certain royal estate (Rokitno in Ukraina). When the Chancellor pronounced the sentence *ubi de iure* in his Court of Chancery, Mniszech brought the case before the Tribunal, bribed its judges and obtained a sentence condemning the Chancellor's highest jurisdiction. This scandalous decree forced Małachowski to ally himself with his Lithuanian colleague, Czartoryski. Soon after, Branicki, offended by Mniszech, joined the opposition.

Thus against the court party there arose something like a country party representing independent and uncorrupted public opinion. But these men were contented for a long time with censuring the shortcomings of the court, but distrusting any action which could be undertaken without foreign support. The Czartoryskis in the event of Elizabeth's death were assured of the support of Catherine, provided she were not set aside by her husband, Peter III. For the present they solicited assistance, moral if not material, principally from France. The leaders of the Family's younger generation: Stanislas and Casimir Poniatowski, Adam Casimir (Prince Augustus' son) Czartoryski and Stanislas Lubomirski announced solemnly not only to Branicki but also to the French diplomatists (Durand, Paulmy) their readiness to collaborate closely with Versailles. All this was "love's labour's lost", inasmuch as Choiseul declined to do anything on Poland's behalf, and moreover censured his predecessors for unnecessary waste of money. France—declared this singular Polonophile—



should spend money on Polish affairs only in case it were necessary to baffle the efforts of an ambitious monarch in his attack on Polish "golden freedom". The Czartoryskis and Branicki were not acquainted with these perverse and cynical ideas, but they guessed quite rightly the danger to the Polish State during the diplomatic campaigns of 1759-60 and 1760-1, when Russia brought under discussion the revision of Poland's eastern frontiers, and when the allies of Versailles, forced by necessity, yielded to her claims. Only General Mokronowski's mission to Versailles, i.e. to the leaders of "the King's secret", seemingly restrained Choiseul's zeal to oblige Russia at the expense of Poland. At the same time the young leaders of the Family, in the face of an impending Russian attack on Danzig, and of the constantly growing danger of subjugation of Poland by the occupants, offered to the British Cabinet to start a rising in Poland which would relieve Frederick II; England must guarantee the insurgents material support and Prussian loyalty. The plan fell flat, naturally enough, since in those very days the English Cabinet contemplated the possibility of satisfying Russia at Poland's expense in the Dnieper lands. Such a revision of the frontier would mean the beginning of the end of the Republic, inasmuch as Frederick was ready to occupy Royal Prussia as soon as the coalition was defeated. The events did not reach such limits, but the heroic brigand king robbed Poland in another way. Having taken possession of Augustus III's mint in Leipzig, he leased it to Jews (Ephraim, Gumpertz, Itzig, etc.) allowing them to forge the currency of other States. This false money was diffused in Poland by a crowd of lesser Jews. The King's profit reached the amount of his subsidy from Pitt; the gains of his partners are unknown. Poland's loss reached several hundred million zlotys. The court summoned an extraordinary Diet in the spring of 1761 to offset this calamity. Since, however, there was no sincere wish to mend the currency (Bruhl wanted to profit by the reform, and his protégé, the treasurer Wessel, entered into criminal negotiations with the Jews), the opposition pronounced on formal grounds the Diet non-existent and the court dared not continue it. The Treasurers—Wessel (in Poland) and Fleming (in Lithuania)—were obliged to proclaim the "reduction" (i.e. devaluation) of the forged currency to its internal value, which caused much irritation to the possessors of cash. At the same time the prolonged military oppression aroused such bitter animosity among the gentry of Great Poland, that without the occupants' heavy hand the outbreak of a confederation could hardly be checked. At the elections to the Tribunal in 1761, the court was

shamefully defeated, and the president of this court, Andrew Zamoyski, an upright and learned jurist, proceeded at once to revise the scandalous Lublin decree.

The growing consolidation of the national forces was rapidly broken by sensational news from the North. Elizabeth Petrovna died on 5 January 1762, and the Imperial Crown passed to Peter III, blindly infatuated with Frederick II. The Tsar betrayed his allies—laid hands on Courland, and rumours circulated that he would not be averse to a discussion with his friend the Hohenzollern of a partition of Poland. Saxony's chances on the Neva were very low—those of the Czartoryskis mounted, but Poland was suddenly threatened by a great danger. The situation did not change much when Catherine deprived her husband of his crown and life. One of her first acts was to forbid Poniatowski's coming to St Petersburg. She would send to Poland Count Kayserling, who had twice already represented Russia at Warsaw, and even taught logic to Stanislas, and who—she wrote—should make either him or Adam Czartoryski King of Poland.

Heavy clouds overshadowed this sunbeam. The new Tsarina was withdrawing from the Seven Years' War in order to settle the historic accounts with Poland, where she would have her own king and her own party to bring about the settlement of the dissenters' affairs, of the border quarrels and the reassumption of the Russian protectorate over the whole Republic, with a view to using it in the distant future against the Turks. The King of Prussia, who narrowly escaped a deadlock, was to serve as shield and instrument of diversion to this purpose. Already in the spring of 1763, the two sovereigns agreed upon the future Polish election. Disregarding the opinion of exhausted Europe, Catherine proceeded without delay in the autumn of 1762 to drive away Prince Charles from Courland, and to restore this duchy to Biron. Immediately after, Prussian troops broke into Great Poland, to plunder and rob it of corn, of people and their property, in order to colonize their depopulated provinces. At this direful moment the Czartoryskis ventured upon a move, which was to prove fatal both to their house and to Poland. Breaking finally with the Wettin dynasty, they attacked at the Diet of 1762 Brühl's rights to nobility. Brühl sought refuge in "exploding" the assembly. In the Senate the Family and Zamoyski severely censured the lazy and selfish Saxon government. This criticism did not meet with the same popular favour as before. Anti-Russian feelings of the people, embittered after the Courland affair, turned against the reformers. But for them there was no retreat. For forty years they had fought under the most

diverse conditions; relying on Austria and on England they combated Russia at the time of Augustus II. During the interregnum they sought salvation in common with the Potockis, France, Sweden and Turkey; they had collaborated with the Saxons under the disagreeable but inevitable protectorate of Russia—then again they solicited the help of France (1759) and of England (1759-62). For forty years they were continually putting off, hiding their “*extrema remedia*” in the deep recesses of their souls. At present, when there was seemingly nothing to lose, and Catherine’s answer to their appeal was, that she meant to help them in “redressing the abuses”, they declared themselves her party—and “for her glory” they furtively attempted to save Poland. They asked for money, for arms—and in case of utmost need, for troops. To the great indignation of the court and of the patriots, they spoke in the Senate (March 1763) against Charles and in defence of Biron’s rights. In this very summer they decided to form a confederation, which would remove all the Bruhls and Mniszechs, and would establish, until the interregnum, a better provisional government. Then, one of them would adorn his head with Chrobry’s crown and would begin anew “creating the Polish world.”

Catherine pretended to approve of this scheme; nobody opposed it. Augustus and Bruhl left for devastated Saxony (24 April 1763) as soon as the Peace of Hubertsburg was concluded. The court circles were dismayed; the recruiting camps of the Family had a hopeful and busy time. A leaflet appeared summoning the Polish nation to stop being the “second Israel” and to reach out for a better future—when suddenly Catherine withdrew her promise of immediate help and ordered the postponement of the outbreak of the confederation until the interregnum. This meant that she would not be used by Ponia-towski as a tool on behalf of constitutional reform in Poland, and that henceforth she would consult her chief adviser Nikita Panin on every move; while Frederick II now begins to play the role of prompter in the Russian Cabinet. The situation of the Czartoryskis became dismal.

Day by day they were losing their credit with those circles which till now believed in their wonder-working wisdom. Their antagonists—this time not so much Mniszech, who accompanied the King and Brühl to Dresden, but the grandees, such as Branicki, Francis Potocki and Charles Radziwiłł—swore vengeance upon them at the reassumption of the Tribunal of the Crown. A massacre, similar to the catastrophe of the Sapiehas at Qlkieniki appeared inevitable, and this time the only political organization seriously anxious for Poland’s

future would fall victim. Happily for the Czartoryskis, Augustus III died suddenly in Dresden (5 October) and was followed closely by Bruhl. The moment arrived, about which Poniatowski spoke with the words of the Voltairean Mohammed: "Le temps de l'Arabie est à la fin venu."

Although Augustus was mourned as "the best of Kings" by all sluggards, and by nearly all Mniszech's creatures, and although a period of singular bad luck was to follow, the Saxon times were remembered by the nation with horror. Not only the King-memorialist Poniatowski, but also people of the opposite camp like Hugh Kollataj and Andrew Kitowicz painted the epoch in sombre hues, and the most representative witness of Augustus III, Martin Matuszewicz unconsciously gave evidence of the wretchedness of the public interest. It would be strange, however, if the nation, which till now depended much upon its own cultural energy, suddenly collapsed into thoughtlessness and vice owing to two paltry kings. The truth is that things went wrong before Augustus II—the evil was greatest at the end of his riotous reign, but under his successor, as was pointed out before, appeared the forerunners of a revival.

In the Saxon times the evil lay primarily in the discord between the King and the nation. When the English had conflicts with their Dutch King, William III, and when afterwards they suffered the first Hanoverians with aversion and ill-will, nevertheless, as was justly observed by Askenazy, in this personal union the guiding force, the *elan*, came from the English side, while in Poland the little Saxon sloop had to tow the immense but dismantled ship of the Republic.

There is no doubt that Poland after Sobieski was badly in need of new elements, of a fresh injection from the West—and she received one of the worst kind. She needed intellectual culture from France, artistic from Italy, economic from England and Holland, constitutional patterns from England and to some extent from Sweden, while Germany could export to her fiscal, military and administrative knowledge. But the two Wettin Kings really cared little for a strengthened and rearmed Poland; for in such an event they were likely to lose the crown and three millions of their own revenue at the next election. The theses of some German historians about "Wettin attempts at Polish reform" are pure fancy. Fleming devised an oligarchic scheme, which could not be accepted; Brühl rejected all the more daring projects both of foreigners and of Poles. The Saxons never mended the Government, left the Polish army in a state approaching caricature, reduced the Diets to insignificance, brought finance to a standstill and practically suppressed Polish diplomacy. If their reigns taught

the Poles anything, it was how to bend their necks before Russia. The fact that, later on, certain conservative circles praised these reigns for their marasmus and quietism is the amplest proof of their harmfulness. Had the court spent on higher education one-tenth of the revenue exacted from Poland, and one-tenth of the money given to certain people for their services, there would be reason to praise their reign. But Augustus had done the easiest thing promised in the *pacta conventa*—the establishment of a military school.

Life was for Poland the best of schools. If anyone were contented with the good old freedom in his own farmstead, and if an average citizen gave up for good old *liberum veto*'s sake the possibility of positive action for the welfare of the state, he was taught during the northern war by the Swedes, the Russians and the Saxons, that in no place, in no nook, would he find either freedom or security. The times that followed, when Poland served as a wayside inn for foreign troops, helped the Poles to get rid of the rest of their illusions. Poland's cherished pride, the Diet, was destitute of legislative power; the other boast, the Tribunal, was commonly decried as a subservient tool of the parties; free election was violated by foreign muskets and cannon; the Hetmanship, dangerous only to legal order and not to the neighbours—could not such liberty originate a feeling of surfeit? And is it not characteristic enough that a writer argued persuasively that French liberty was better than Polish? Anyone who wished to find an instrument able to restore the possibility of action to the Republic, had to borrow his patterns from abroad.

The fashion of sending young men to Western Europe never died out, but in Augustus III's time the boys of the noble families knew better where to go and for what purpose. Also among the tutors brought from abroad there were not a few who taught their "*Télémaques*" something worth while. The *élite* of the nation were edified by talks with the envoys of the western countries; the young members of the Family in particular owed much to the English. The example of Russia after Peter the Great could not fail to rouse envy. Thus, thanks to the direct and indirect influence of the West, a movement heralding a better future was started in Augustus III's time. It happened late and progressed slowly, often lagging behind Germany, and even Russia—but still it was the beginning of progress.

Learned societies were being formed. Poetry made itself heard in the persons of Wenceslas Rzewuski and of Elizabeth Drużbacka. From 1729 on, permanent newspapers were being edited, with contents merely informational at first, since current political journalism still

retained the form of unprinted leaflets. Mizler de Kolof, a very diligent Saxon, reprinted the old historians and published economic treatises (Długosz's *History* was at last published in 1711 by a German, Hauysson). The two bishops and cousins Załuski, Andrew Stanislas and Joseph Andrew, worked on behalf of national education on a larger, European scale, and founded a library of several hundred thousand volumes. The king, Stanislas Leszczyński, added to his fame by pioneer work in the field of education and of political progress. We should not overrate his activities as the educator of young Poles in a military school founded by himself in Lunéville—this school did not bring forth any eminent politician nor promoter of culture. On the other hand, Leszczyński's political treatise, already mentioned, *The Free Voice to Make Freedom Safe*, printed in 1749 in Polish and in French, gave evidence of rare political culture in the "charitable philosopher", and certainly was a spiritual yeast to the minds of the Polish "republicans". Leszczyński instructed his countrymen to strive after better social justice, a unification of the authorities of the State, better economy and finance—and, last not least, a standing army of a hundred thousand men. It does not matter that the author fitted the contents and the general tone of the treatise to the taste of his possible readers. We are convinced that he could stand a dispute with Europe's leading brains, as is proved, among other evidence, by his enthusiasm for the idea of universal peace. The fact that *The Free Voice* had no immediate influence (its manifold repercussions are heard in Stanislas Augustus' reign) can be partly explained by the barrenness of thought affected by Brühl and Mnischech after 1750, and partly by the immaturity of the minds to which the author appealed.

In the field of education there was most to be done. It was here that the most meritorious Pole of the eighteenth century, "Præceptor Poloniae" Stanislas Konarski, played his part. Seeing that the Piarist schools were as obsolete as those founded by Jesuits, he first of all created a new model school, called Collegium Nobilium, where he began to educate the *élite* of the nobility and gentry—boys destined for the Diet, Senate and civil service. He taught them that not words but concrete ideas and realities are the elements of thinking. He revealed to them the essence of existence with the methods of the "philosophia recentiorum"; that is, taking into account the results of scientific research of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He showed a new road to the art of speaking on public matters in a treatise *De emendandis eloquentiae vitiis*, where he pleaded for good Polish clarity, simplicity and logic. In 1754, with the approval of Bene-

dict XIV, he extended his reform to all Piarist schools. It must be acknowledged that the Jesuits followed in his footsteps—some of them, more enlightened, at times even outstripped him. Not before the first troops of his pupils entered the wide world did Konarski, having first taken advice from the more experienced senators, venture to publish his work, on which he had spent thirty years, and a part of which he wrote in 1744-8, namely *On the effective conduct of Debates*, 4 vols. (1761-3). It is a powerful attack upon the *liberum veto*, and at the same time a magnificent *Credo* of a modern republican, crowned with a scheme for the reconstruction of the Republic. The author drew some of his ideas from the English Constitution (two Houses, voting by majority) and some from the Swedish (the Government conceived as a permanent Council selected by and out of the members of the Houses); he had also studied the liberal institutions of Switzerland, Venice, Holland and Germany. Firmly convinced that the reformed Parliament would be able to redress successively all the sore points, Konarski never broke a lance (outside his educational work in the colleges) on behalf of social reforms, in favour of the burghers and peasants. His victory was due in large measure to this concentration of attack. It is true that he had followed the Polish civic ideals, believed in the wise liberty of an enlightened nation, contrary to the point of view of Skarga, who denied all capacity for political wisdom to the Poles, worshipped only authority and hierarchy—and finally failed. Konarski's work made a great impression in the Czartoryskis' favour, he himself was to become the nearest collaborator of Stanislas Augustus in the political education of the Poles. But it is a long way from applause to realization. The times of Augustus III can boast of a range of superior minds, such as Stanislas Poniatowski, the father of the King; Andrew Stanislas Załuski, the two Czartoryskis, Anthony Potocki, John Tarło—but these personages were scattered among antagonistic camps, and in any case were incapable of raising the narrow-minded masses of the gentry to a higher level. It can be demonstrated almost with exactitude that all the first drafts of reforms of Stanislas Augustus' time were drawn about the middle of the eighteenth century; the generation which produced them could not be spiritually torpid. But since—as was demonstrated by A. V. Dicey—even in England, where nobody's lips were sealed by a *Veto*, the realization of a reform always took sixty years, we need not wonder if in Poland the seeds sown by the Czartoryskis and by Konarski were to bring crops only in the next reign, when her neighbours' strangling hands were already at Poland's throat.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CONSTITUTION OF POLAND BEFORE THE PARTITIONS

**T**HIS sketch aims at presenting in brief compass the basic principles of the Polish constitution from the end of the sixteenth century to the great constitutional reforms of the Four Years' Diet. At the very outset it is necessary to insist above all upon the fact that the constitution of the Polish state as it existed at the end of the sixteenth century was the outcome of centuries of slow but continuous evolution. The most weighty constitutional institutions then accepted—the contractual conception of the state, elective monarchy, the reality of royal power, the organization of the diet and dietines, the organization of the governing power—reach far into the depth of the constitutional relationships of Poland. Their roots strike deep into the organism of the Piast state. Thanks to the organic evolution of some three centuries, the basic constitutional institutions became fully crystallized in the Polish state of the sixteenth century.

These institutions are the outcome of a natural logical development which transformed certain constitutional elements of the middle ages into the forms which we recognize at the end of the sixteenth century. This may have happened the more easily that the evolution of the constitutional connexions followed the basic line of development, which had not varied in direction since the appearance of the Polish state. While the period preceding the seventeenth century was dynamic in development, making possible the rise of new constitutional institutions in the sixteenth, the period following proved barren of new institutions or of considerable changes in the constitution. Such changes and developments as there were tended only to deform and warp existing institutions, which survive, thus modified, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only the reforms of the Four Years' Diet brought new and profitable changes in the constitution. After these brief general remarks, we turn to study the organism of the Constitution during this period.



## THE TERRITORIAL BUILDING UP OF THE STATE

Thanks to the Lublin Union in 1569, a United Commonwealth arose. This consisted of the Crown, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and a third member, Livonia, which was subordinate to the former two. The first province, "the Crown", was the outcome of the former territorial evolution of the Polish Kingdom. The notion of "*Corona Regni Poloniae*", appearing first in the second half of the fourteenth century under Casimir the Great, became a symbol of the indivisibility of the lands of the Kingdom. It was not peculiar to Poland. It arose in neighbouring lands, such as Bohemia and Hungary, and above all in England, where it survives as a legal conception to this day. It showed a certain dynamic movement in Polish affairs. There was a tendency on the one hand to unite more and more new territories to the lands of the Crown; on the other, to bring into closer contact lands formerly linked with the Crown, but loosely. Among those treated thus were Mazovia, Royal Prussia and the Silesian principalities. The same legal construction tended to apply to the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The concept, however, succumbed before principles introduced by the Lublin Union. The Crown, then appearing as one of the provinces of the Commonwealth, consisted of Great Poland including Mazovia and Royal Prussia together with Little Poland including the Ruthenian lands, Volhynia, Podolia, the Ukraine, and Podlachia. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, comprising the Lithuanian lands in the strict sense of the word, the principality of Samogitia with White and Black Russia, formed the second province in the Polish Commonwealth. There was a tendency, indeed, towards separating the Ruthenian lands into a province of their own, but this was not realized. Livonia, however, which was brought within the commonwealth in 1561, became a separate province, subordinate to the Crown and Lithuania jointly. Part of it, indeed was ceded to Sweden at Oliva (1660), but the southern portion, "Polish Livonia", was retained until the Partitions.

The state thus constituted also held dependent fiefs. Such was Ducal Prussia, constituted a lay principality in 1525. It remained in the hands of the Ansbach Hohenzollerns, and later passed to the Electoral line. The connexion with Poland, however, lasted only until 1657, when the treaty of Wehlau changed the relationship into an alliance. The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, formed from southwestern Livonia, remained a Polish fief until the Partitions.

The capital of this spacious state was Warsaw, to which Sigis-

mund III removed his court from Cracow, wishing to be nearer to Baltic, Lithuanian and Swedish affairs. The area of seventeenth-century Poland, without the part of Livonia lost to Sweden and without the fiefs, amounted to about 990,000 square kilometres, with more than 6,000,000 people. Thus Poland stood second in Europe to Muscovy in point of size, and surpassed Sweden, the German Empire, France, Spain and England.

### THE CONTRACTUAL CONCEPTION OF THE STATE

The constitution of the Polish state at the end of the sixteenth century shows the distinctive marks of the contractual state. The relation between the ruling and the social elements was maintained as contractual. Such an arrangement was indeed no novelty among contemporary constitutions. Its elements may be perceived even in the Piast epoch. They developed usually on parallel lines with the principle of the elective monarchy. In 1573, however, the conception of the contractual state appeared full-blown. Having been known hitherto in the realms of fact, and even of law, it now presented itself for the first time in the form of a diplomatic act, the so-called *pacta conventa*, hitherto unknown. These were in essence a bilateral contract, made between the king-elect on the one side and society on the other. The contract defined the mutual obligations of both sides. It was therefore the basis for the assumption of their mutual relationship.

Such a contract between the ruling and social elements had been met with in previous constitutional relations. Indeed the widely developed local privileges and the later general confirmations of rights were given by the kings in fulfilment of their previous contract with society. Externally, however, they appeared in the form of a unilateral act issued by the king. Such a phenomenon as this in Poland appeared likewise in canon law and in other constitutions, among them that of England. Some English authors, interpreting the theory of privilege in their own fashion, regard thus the numerous privileges, from Magna Carta onwards, which were given to the social factor in England.

The *pacta conventa*, however, for the first time embodied the contract in a bilateral act signed by both the parties who were mutually bound by it. Such a contract the *pacta conventa*, as a special institution of public law, remained to the end of the commonwealth. They were renewed at every accession. When the new king was elected, they were always drawn up and registered afresh. The obligations which

they comprised grew more and more, so that those of Stanislas Augustus were several times more voluminous than the earliest, those of Henri de Valois. New duties were ever imposed upon the king.

The *pacta conventa* were accounted laws of state, but they differed somewhat from the rest. They had no character of permanence. Their binding force extended only to the reign of the monarch with whom they were concluded. After his death they must be renewed with his successor. In origin and character, therefore, they differed materially from the so-called "eternal" constitutions.

They were not an exclusively Polish institution. We find a certain analogy in the *Wahl-Kapitulation* of Germany, the *Konungaförsäkran* of Sweden and the *promessi* of Venice.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTIVE MONARCHY

The principle of elective monarchy was most closely linked with the contractual conception of the state. When the king did not succeed to the throne by hereditary title, and was not the lawful ruler "by God's grace", but owed the crown to the electors' will, his relations with society rested on a different basis from those of hereditary monarchy. An elected king entered upon immediate relations with his electors, and elements of mutual association remained, which often led to the formation of a contractual relation between the sovereign and the social factor. Such was the case both in Poland and in other lands where the elective principle prevailed. Hence the two principles are most closely intertwined, and it can undoubtedly be said that the elective principle makes possible the relationship of contract. In the aforesaid period this principle became the established law.

The elements of the elective principle were old in Poland. After the dynastic elections which appeared at the end of the fourteenth century with elections of a supplementary character, individual election becomes the law during the Jagellonian epoch. The circle to which the election of a Polish king was entrusted was a wide one. The gentry as a whole made the choice, by the so-called *electio virilim*. In this, the Polish constitution differed materially from that of her neighbours, where the election was usually confined to a smaller number of electors. She thereby inevitably incurred great danger of political commotions. It must be observed, however, that elections made by small numbers were also known to cause subversive acts, such as papal schisms and revolutions in the German Empire,

One of the first clauses in the "articles" of Henri de Valois (1573-4)

sets forth a principle repeated in subsequent *pacta conventa* until the end of the commonwealth. This cancels the principle of hereditary monarchy, and recognizes as obligatory that of the elective character of the crown. Subsequent clauses insist that during the lifetime of the king no preparations for election nor choice of a new ruler shall be made, nor may his government discuss it until after his death. Thus they designed to eliminate all influence by a king on the choice of his successor. He might neither designate him nor influence the future electors. This principle was not strange to contemporary Europe. Like the Polish king, the Holy Roman Emperor and the kings of Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Bohemia and the Doge of Venice were elective.

### CONCEPTION OF THE ROYAL POWER

Both the foregoing principles sufficiently limited the basis and scope of action of the royal power. The election was conditional, and the king-elect ascended the throne only on the conditions expressed in the agreement. This fact clearly defined the outline of the conception of the royal power. It was not unlimited, based on hereditary monarchy, but on the contrary it was limited by the will of the electors from which it was derived. The limitation came from the approval by both sides of the conditions expressed in their agreement. This agreement bound them both—the society and the king-elect. Society undertook to proclaim and crown the king and to swear fidelity and obedience to him. The king-elect, in return, promised society to accept and carefully to perform the stipulations of the *pacta conventa*. He would therefore take the oath, fulfil the various obligations of the pacts, maintain and respect the binding laws of the state, and accept and respect new ones voted during the interregnum. The acts published in fulfilment of these promises were, above all, the *pacta conventa*, securing in the form of a contract mutual obligations. Originally, they had contained undertakings by the king of a personal nature, not public, that is, constitutional stipulations. Such undertakings related, for example, to furnishing military or financial aid, building fleets for war and trade, and educating youth. Only later did the character of the *pacta conventa* change, when the “articles” of Henri de Valois (1573) were incorporated in them. Moreover, the king published an act confirmatory of his oath, the so-called *litterae iuramenti praestiti*, and the *generalis confirmatio iurium*, confirming his promise to respect during his reign the binding laws of the state. There were also the so-called “Henrician articles”, the outcome of a

partial reform of the laws effected at the election diet of Henri de Valois. They dealt chiefly with constitutional problems, especially the standing of the king in the state, and introduced new constitutional principles, giving something of a modern character. They were later included in the *pacta conventa*.

The obligations thus assumed by the king in his compact with society distinctly limited the royal power. Henceforward it could move only within narrow boundaries. The acceptance of such a basis for the royal power called forth further consequences. The king's undertaking of obligations involved his responsibility for their fulfilment. He made himself answerable to society for accomplishing his obligations under their contract. If he did not respect or fulfil the agreed conditions under which he succeeded to the throne, society had the right to withhold obedience. This was the *articulus de non praestanda oboedientia*, covered in substance by the *ius resistendi*, that well-known feature of the constitution alike of England and Hungary.

This right of society was logically derived from two earlier principles—the contractual relation between monarch and society, and the responsibility of the monarch to society for the performance of the duties undertaken. It was their logical fulfilment.

The manner of refusing obedience to the king was more closely discussed by two following constitutions of 1607 and 1609. It could follow only upon a clear transgression by the king of his accepted obligations or of binding laws, and according to a defined procedure. The primate must first admonish the king, and only if this did not produce the desired result did the senate take action, followed by the diet.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DIET

To represent the organization of the legislature of the old commonwealth, the so-called *Walny Sejm Koronny*, it is necessary to emphasize two facts. First, this General Crown Diet was a central organ legislating for the territory of the whole commonwealth. The Diets hitherto existing, such as the Lithuanian, Prussian, Mazovian and Livonian, were united with the Crown Diet, thus forming the highest legislative authority in the state. Secondly, the General Crown Diet arose in this fashion, founding itself on the organic basis which was worked out in the course of the sixteenth century.

On the basis of these principles, the General Crown Diet was composed of three elements, the House of Deputies, the House of Senators and the King. The Deputies were representatives of the

gentry, elected at local Dietines for a single Diet. Their number increased during the seventeenth century to 172, and under the Saxon kings reached its highest total of 182, not counting the Prussians, whose number varied. As the House contained no representatives of the towns or clergy, it was purely an assembly of the gentry. The Deputies did not enter the Diet in virtue of their personal right, but were only envoys and intermediaries for explaining the will of all the gentry of their district, depending therefore upon the local Dietine. Thus the House of Deputies was based purely upon the representative principle, unlike the chambers of knights or lesser nobles in western states, where membership was chiefly a personal right. The Polish Diet therefore most resembled the Hungarian.

The Senatorial House was organized on different foundations. Its components were spiritual, represented by the archbishops and bishops, and temporal, represented by the highest local officials, such as governors (*voyevodes*) and castellans, as well as officials of state or ministers, and sometimes by Polish feudatories. Thus the Senate, unlike the other House, was not elective or representative but personal and official. The higher dignitaries, lay and spiritual, sat in virtue of their office. Their offices gave them senatorial rank in the state. Thus the gentry filled both Houses, but in virtue of different titles.

The third factor in the Diet was the king. He, however, was closely and organically associated with the Senate, as if in modern monarchy, and almost always acted along with the Senate, so that it could almost be said that he went to the Diet surrounded by the Senate. This undoubtedly entitles us to assign to the Polish legislature a bi-cameral character. It is therefore contrasted with similar organs in western Europe, which were based on chambers of estates usually maintaining their interests against the king. In this respect the Polish Diet most resembles the Hungarian or English. The king, as both a component of the Diet and its foremost factor, had the right to summon it. In principle the Diet could not take place without the king.

Originally the basis of the organization of the Diet was the principle of equality between its three factors. Hence arose the so-called theory of the three estates, Deputies, Senators and King. To legislate, all three must concur. Each had the right to veto. To be valid, a constitution must be voted by both Houses and secure the assent of the king. In the seventeenth century, however, the existing equality was completely enfeebled, and with it the equal rank of the three factors

in legislation vanished. In further parliamentary practice, the King lost his former status, and the deciding voice passed to the Deputies and Senate.

On the basis of one of the stipulations of the Henri de Valois articles, the usual, ordinary Diet was distinguished from the unusual, extraordinary. The former must meet every two years for six weeks: the latter in case of sudden need must be summoned for a fortnight. In voting laws the principle of unanimity prevailed: to make them valid, everyone must agree. Hence in the course of time a second principle was framed, the so-called *liberum veto*, by which a single adverse vote defeated the proposed measure and caused the whole Diet to break up, so that all measures previously accepted became inoperative (*sistere activitatem*). In time, a tendency to limit the *liberum veto* arose. In 1768, it was resolved that it must relate only to certain matters (*materiae status*), while to other questions, economic and juridical *materiae*, the principle of a majority vote became applicable. Moreover, laws previously voted were freed from its adverse effects, and it ceased to break up the Diet.

Sessions of the Diet followed established usage, whether the Houses sat together or separately. The activity of the General Diet constantly increased. Above all, legislation belonged to its sphere of action. In this it was not limited only to laws of a national character or to those relating to the organization of the gentry. It also intervened in the organization of other estates, a fact which did much to weaken equality between the several estates. As the competence of the Diet in legislation widened, that of the king contracted. It was chiefly confined to questions of the second rank, sometimes causing, however, confusion of competence between two factors of state power.

In time, the Diet began to intervene in executive matters, issuing a whole series of constitutions for national administration. It likewise possessed itself of judicial power, and Diet courts made their appearance.

Votes arising from the legislative activity of the Diet appeared as constitutions. Unlike the conception of a modern constitution, these comprised even the smallest and most trifling votes. There were also special laws embodying certain votes on treasury matters.

The Diets after 1569 met in Warsaw, but after 1673 every third Diet met at Grodno.

It must be emphasized that, although the Senate became an integral part of the Diet, it retained its old function of royal council. The king sometimes summoned the Senate to obtain its opinion on

current questions of policy, and sometimes he consulted the Senators by letter. Most often the Senate assembled for council after the end of the session of the Diet.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DIETINES

Dietines were meetings or gatherings of all the gentry from a given region or county, whether they were landed proprietors or not. Only settled gentry, however, possessed active and passive rights (1690). Several kinds of Dietine may be distinguished. Above all, the pre-Diet Dietines were summoned by the King before each Diet, for the purpose of choosing Deputies to attend it. Of such Dietines there were more than seventy in the whole country. Besides choosing Deputies, these Dietines drew up their instructions for the Diet. Deputies chosen thus joined with the Senators in so-called General Dietines apart from Little Poland, Great Poland, Mazovia, Prussia and Lithuania, for joint consultation and deliberation over the position in the Diet. In the course of the seventeenth century these General Dietines were changed into provincial sessions held during the Diet.

There were also Election Dietines, summoned by the Sheriffs to elect candidates for local offices. As these offices were held for life and seldom fell vacant, the meetings were rarer than those of the pre-Diet Dietines. From the creation of the Crown Tribunal in 1578, Dietines of Deputies were established consisting of deputies of the gentry. These met at fixed times every year and selected judges for the tribunal. Dietines of Report possessed greater significance. At these the Deputies gave an account of their activity during the Diets, and after 1613 they chose the Deputies for the Treasury Tribunal.

Moreover in time of interregnum Hooded Dietines developed, united in the form of a confederation. These exercised temporary power in the counties, determined the principles of defence, organized a separate hooded judicature, and so forth.

During the seventeenth century, the sphere of action of the Dietines widened, and their importance increased. They began to be convoked also in the period between the Diets. These were the so-called Economic Dietines, which dealt with the affairs of the county. They assessed the taxes imposed by the Diet, voted special Dietine taxes, maintained the army of the district under the command of cavalry captains whom they nominated, and so forth. Thus Dietine Governments arose, where many questions of local administration



passed into the hands of the gentry of a given county as a whole. This caused the partial decentralisation of the state administration, especially in the sphere of the Treasury and Army.

The constitution of 1717, reforming the Dietines, defined more closely the scope of their activity and the times at which the Dietines of Deputies and the Economic Dietines could meet. It also limited the Dietine Governments in the military sphere. A similar limitation, however, was applied in the affairs of the Treasury only by the constitution of 1768.

In principle, the Dietines were summoned by the King, or in his stead by the Primate, except the Dietines of Election, which it fell to the Governor to summon. Later, the Diet also began to summon Dietines. They were presided over by a Marshal whom they chose. At Dietines of Election the Governor presided, and at those under the bond of Confederation, the Marshal of the County Confederation. Their resolutions were styled lauds, and from the end of the sixteenth century they were registered as separate acts.

#### SENATORS-RESIDENT

Besides the Senate, there was at this time, based on the Henri de Valois articles, the new institution of Senators-Resident. This was summoned by the Senate. There was, indeed, a movement for representation of the House of Deputies within it, but this came to nothing.

At first, sixteen Senators, and from 1641 twenty-eight, were summoned for two years. They resided continuously beside the king, during the interval between one ordinary Diet and the next. Every half year such exchanges were made that four Senators were always in attendance, and later, seven. The institution was designed to furnish the king with a council when the Diet was not in session. He was not bound by their opinion, but he must consult them. As counsellors, they resided at his court. From 1607, the votes of Senators-Resident, the so-called *Senatus consulta*, must be recorded and afterwards read in the Diet, to inform it of the most important questions of state which had occurred since the last ordinary session. The constitution of 1717 further confirmed this institution.

Thenceforward the Senators-Resident were entitled to a decisive voice, so that the king must submit to their resolution unless it conflicted with the existing law. This institution disappeared in 1764, and a new organ, the Permanent Council, took its place. Even during

the period of its greatest development, the institution of Senators-Resident never formed a department of the Diet or Senate, an organ known in the constitutions of western countries.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF INTERREGNA

The royal power came to an end with the death of every king. This inaugurated a new period of "interregnum", which lasted from the death of one king to the coronation of the next. During the interregnum, the Primate, then entitled Interrex, wielded power in the state as representative of the king. Proclaiming the king's death, he summoned the so-called Hooded Dietines, the object of which was to maintain public security in the counties. Under his presidency, the Convocation Diet assembled in the form of a confederation. Its duties were to safeguard the state against internal and external violence and to prepare for the Election Diet. In the second stage of the interregnum, the Election Dietines assembled, and chose deputies for the Election Diet. Next began the sessions of the Election Diet, with a view to selecting a candidate for the throne. This body prepared and recorded the text of the *pacta conventa* which must be laid before the future monarch-elect. The act of election was governed by the principle *virilim*, every gentleman having the right to attend on the field and to take part in the choice. The gentry from the nearer regions attended in greater numbers than those from further afield. The Election Diet thus consisted of the Senate, the House of Deputies and the gentry as a whole.

The choice must be unanimous, and when several tens of thousands of gentry met on the field of election this was not always easy. Sometimes the less numerous party gave way. Now and then, however, it came to a double election, which caused a battle between the parties.

After the accomplishment of the election, the third stage of the interregnum began. The Coronation Diet was summoned to Cracow, in exceptional cases to Warsaw, for the coronation. Only by being crowned did the king-elect attain to full royal power. Having attained power on the basis of election and of contract with society, he became by coronation king "by the grace of God". This grace he received by being anointed with oil at the coronation ceremonies in Cracow cathedral. The Primate of Poland enjoyed the right to crown the king. After his coronation, the king took the coronation oath, and then confirmed the acts of the interregnum and issued a general confirmation of the laws.

## CONFEDERATIONS

Among the institutions of public law in ancient Poland, confederation, as a constitutional form, often played an important part in the life of the state. Confederations were unions of society, or of certain social groups formed for the attainment of certain ends.

Confederations arose above all during an interregnum, replacing the royal power. The power which passed to the king by his election now returned to society. Therefore confederations called "the hooded ones" were formed, as the basic constitutional state institutions during an interregnum. They exercised authority in the several counties. Besides these, there were confederations which arose in the lifetime of a king. These aimed sometimes at replacing the royal power, if it was temporarily suspended, the king being absent, and sometimes they were directed against the king. Then the confederations based themselves on the political theory of the omnipotence of the gentry. The so-called General Confederations, which embraced the whole state and therefore all the gentry, stood above the king, for, according to the conception of the contractual state, the king was responsible for his royal activity to the society, and therefore to the gentry. The confederations, accordingly, wished to bring the king to their judgment-seat.

In practice, however, the significance of a confederation depended on its strength. Sometimes royal confederations were also formed, and in such a case it depended on their relative strength whether the king indicted his opponents as rebels against the state, or joined them and thereby made their confederation legal. Confederations were usually formed in one of the counties and often broadened over the whole state as general confederations. Such were headed by a marshal, and county confederations likewise chose themselves marshals. In later times, councillors were added to assist individual marshals. The chief organ of the confederation was the General Council, composed like the Diet. The several counties chose deputies to attend it. Such a council, however, was not always convoked.

As a constitutional institution, the confederation usually exhibited greater strength. This came above all from the fact that the bonds between the confederates were closer. The union was usually confirmed by an oath. In confederations also the resolutions were taken by a majority of votes, not unanimously, as in sessions of the Diet.

## THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE STATE

The organization of the old Polish administration remained until the eighteenth century on the foundations which previous epochs had laid. Even trifling changes may scarcely be observed. Tradition was the dominant principle in the formation of the Polish official hierarchy.

A further characteristic was the independence of the officials as against the king. The lack of a due measure of official dependence upon him deprived him of the possibility of carrying out his plans. The principle that officials were irremovable, based on the constitution of 1538, still existed. Even if an official had broken the law, the king could not dismiss him. With such intangibility, officials could often carry their own will into effect, even against that of the king.

While neighbouring European states created a well-organized official hierarchy, subordinate to the king and dependent on him, by which he could effect his aims, in Poland he was thus impeded and dependent. There could therefore be no question of the normal execution of royal edicts, or of the due co-ordination of the executive power. The organization of officials, their sphere of action and their responsibility are the object of legislation by the Diet, and therefore do not depend exclusively on the decision of the king. The establishment of a new office must be passed by the Diet. The king alone could create none of any kind. From the moment that the Senate, which was a body of officials, acquired a decisive vote, there followed the characteristic dependence of the king upon the higher officials, in legislation and administration—a manifestation of the weakening of the royal power. The king, none the less, remained essentially the chief official in the state, and for a long time he was the only organ of government common to the Crown and Lithuania. At the head of the state administration stood the central officers. Their dualism was maintained to the full, the Crown and Lithuania having each its own officers. First came the ministerial body, the Great and Court Marshals of the Crown and of Lithuania, for representation and some matters of justice, the Great Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of the Crown and of Lithuania, for foreign and internal affairs, and the Great Treasurers of the Crown and of Lithuania for finance. Later the Hetmans, Great and Field, for military affairs, began to be reckoned with them. Theirs was the command of the forces under arms, the Field Hetman acting as substitute for the Great Hetman. Within their jurisdiction, the

Hetmans, like other ministers, might issue rules on appropriate military and judicial matters, which were called "the Hetmans' articles". The highest officials gave orders to the lower in the king's name. There were also many lesser officials of the central government or court, such as secretaries, referendaries and so forth.

From 1764, the Great Commissions arose, Financial and Military, for the Crown and Lithuania separately. These were collegiate bodies chosen by the Diet. They assumed a considerable part of the functions of the respective ministries. In 1773, the Educational Commission was created, as the first authority common to the Crown and Lithuania. At the same time the Permanent Council arose, with the same character of a common authority, and likewise a collegiate body chosen by the Diet. It functioned either as a full Council under the presidency of the king or in five separate departments under the presidency of the respective ministers. In the Council the king lost his old monarchic attributes for he was bound by its resolutions.

Among the officials of the autonomous lands we continue to meet with the same hierarchy as in earlier periods governors, castellans, chamberlains, judges and so forth.

The sheriffs (*starosta*), who of old were the sole lower organ of the executive, likewise began to free themselves from the influence of the king. They therefore approached ever more nearly to district officials, and eventually took rank among them. Thus the king came to lack any provincial officials immediately subordinate to himself.

As previously described, part of the state administration passed to the Diet, and especially to the Economic Dietines. This decentralization of the executive still further weakened the royal power. The Dietines, moreover, were too numerous to administer the country with due efficiency. The difficulty was much increased when the chief authorities had to come to an understanding with scores of Dietines.

### THE JUDICIAL ORGANIZATION

Courts of law, district, castle and chamberlains', were also maintained for the gentry. As the district courts, however, assembled more and more seldom, the castle courts in increasing measure took their place.

An important reform was accomplished in the supreme judicature. Three tribunals were created as the highest in the state. That of the Crown sat alternately in Piotrków and Lublin; that of Lithuania, in Wilno, Nowogródek and Minsk; and the third, for the Ruthenian

provinces, in Łuck. This last, however, soon disappeared, and the Ruthenian provinces were subjected to the Crown tribunal, as were also the Prussian. These tribunals were composed of deputies elected at the so-called Deputy Dietines in the counties. This fact stamps the tribunal as an institution of the gentry without the characteristics of professional organism of officials. Besides the lay deputies in the tribunals, spiritual deputies, elected by the chapters, attended. These took part in the judicial business only when one of the parties was an ecclesiastic, and in that case their number equalled that of the laymen. A marshal chosen by the deputies presided. The tribunals were concerned above all with appeals from the district and castle-courts. These, as a court of second instance, the tribunal finally decided. Thus the king's judicial power was signally curtailed, and the principle that the king is the supreme judge in the state was contradicted. Many matters were moreover decided by courts of the first instance.

The rise of the tribunals signally limited the existing royal judicature such as that of the Diet. The composition of Diet courts common to the Crown and Lithuania, moreover, changed materially, for, besides the king and Senate, deputies now took part in them.

Separate law-courts, such as those of the referendaries, were also formed at the court of the king, for deciding questions hitherto dealt with by the assessors' courts, such as suits of the farmers of royal estates against sheriffs and lease-holders. There was also the court of the Marshal, which exercised penal jurisdiction in the king's name in the royal place of sojourn.

During an interregnum the existing judicature came to a standstill, and a substitute must be found. Accordingly, in place of the ordinary courts, hooded courts were set up in the counties and districts, passing judgment with the superior authority of a confederation. A general hooded tribunal was also appointed to secure order at the time of the election and safety in the Diet.

With the development of the confederation, confederate courts, unknown before, began to appear. When a confederation was formed, the ordinary courts tended to come to a standstill, and they were replaced by confederate courts like the hooded tribunals.

In the town judicature, alderman's courts went on and in a certain degree the local councils. Courts of higher instance maintained themselves in the shape of the high court in Cracow castle and in six towns courts which completely disappeared at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In the villages, judicature acquired a patrimonial character.

## THE FINANCIAL ORGANIZATION

Fiscal economy was based on foundations laid down by the end of the sixteenth century. The division between the treasury of the king and of the state was dominant, and therefore the division of revenues into royal and national.

The income of the king's treasury came from a part of the landed estates, the so-called "economies" or great territories remaining under immediate administration, salt-works and mines, taxes on minerals (*obora olkuska*), some customs dues and the income from the mint, which, however, Sigismund III renounced in 1632. The income of the national treasury consisted of a part of the landed estates, the so-called starosties, from which there was paid the so-called "quarter" (one-fifth of the income), going to the treasury of Rawa to secure the payment of the army, customs-dues having always the character of dues on transit, and, from 1649, *hiberna*, paid according to acreage, borne by royal and ecclesiastical estates instead of the former obligation of quartering the army. There were also the infantry contributions, a poll-tax on Christians and Jews and a "charitable subsidy" from the clergy. In addition, numerous occasional taxes were paid into the national treasury, such as levies, often voted by the Diet, or the later hearth-taxes, poll-taxes, bung-taxes (*czopowe*) and so forth.

The principle of control over Polish fiscal matters was well established. The Diet watched over the accounts and the disposition of the money from the taxes. From the beginning of the seventeenth century it chose a special commission for this purpose. As it met in Radom, it was known as the Radom Fiscal Tribunal. It dealt with fiscal matters of the Crown. For Lithuania a similar tribunal met in Wilno. Separate commissions controlled the fiscal administration in the counties.

During the seventeenth century, as the functions of the Dietines increased, a gradual decentralization of the fiscal economy began. Separate county treasuries arose, a separate system of county taxes, numbering some twenty, was formed, and these were paid into the county treasuries and administered by the Dietines. In the Diet, the Dietines declared only what sum of money they pledged themselves to pay to the national treasury. The constitution of 1717 produced a measure of fiscal reform. It limited the county treasury to collecting the bung-tax and petty imposts. It closely defined the income and expenditure of the national treasury, thus for the first time in Polish

history creating the basis of a budget. In still later legislation, the fiscal administration of the Dietines and the separate county treasuries were abolished. The royal treasury was managed by the Court Treasurer both of the Crown and of Lithuania. Under the Saxon kings a separate fiscal house arose, the Chamber, presided over by a Treasurer, which was concerned with the management of the king's finances. Those of the nation were divided between the so-called Rawa treasury and the separate state treasury managed by the Treasurers of the Crown and Lithuania.

### ARMY ORGANIZATION

The army organization must be based on a continuation of the general levy. In practice, however, this was seldom summoned, and therefore entirely lost its old importance. The principle of a standing army prevailed more and more. The basis of such a force was the regulars. In time of need recruiting was carried beyond what their budget allowed. The Hetmans held the chief command. Other means were tried for increasing the number of the required army. The so-called picked or conscripted infantry was established, and efforts were made to adapt Cossacks to military service. The picked infantry were established on the basis of compelling the towns and royal villages to send to the war one picked man from every twenty units.

The sheriffs and leaseholders of the Crown, however, found this institution inconvenient, and their opposition caused the picked infantry to be discontinued, and in its place a new small payment to be introduced, the *lanowe*, which must be paid to the sheriff with the "quarter".

As for the Cossacks, many attempts were made to create from among them an army guard upon the Dnieper. Hence arose the so-called Cossack register, compiled under Batory, accompanied by wide autonomy. Owing to the changeable policy pursued towards them, however, these attempts gave no great results. The Hadziacz agreement of 1658, assigning them important rights, came too late, for a considerable part of the Cossacks deserted to Muscovy. Only a part of the Cossacks which remained Polish were under a separate Hetman or Ataman. In 1699 an end of the Cossack registration was made.

In these circumstances, only the standing army was the basis of the military organization at this time. By the side of the king's standing army both of Polish and of foreign categories, some great lords of the eastern borderlands maintained separate armed bodies at their own expense.



In the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Dietines attained their greatest development, they assumed certain military functions, enlisting soldiers and nominating captains of cavalry. The so-called district soldiery was formed. In 1717 the question of pay was regulated, permanent taxes for the army being established.

The numbers of the army were not fixed. They depended on the need and on the amount of taxes established for the army. In the constitution of 1717, under pressure from foreign powers, the number was fixed at 24,000, 16,000 for the Crown and 8000 for Lithuania.

At the end of this period, however, the armed strength of the state did not reach even this figure. Thus, while in the chief European countries armaments were always growing stronger, in Poland, on the contrary, in comparison with her neighbours, they became less and less.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY

Society, as before, was divided into four estates. The distinction between them remained undiminished. The estate of gentry, closed and self-centred, was still more separate from the rest. Entry into it became very difficult: in 1601 the attainment of nobility, and in 1641 the "indigenate", required a special vote of the Diet. Within the estate the principle of equality prevailed, all gentry having the same rights. They stood out against the granting of titles such as baron, count or prince. Despite this principle, however, considerable difference arose in practice between the gentry on the basis of property, since vast landed possessions enabled their owners to exercise considerable influence on the remainder of the gentry.

The estate of gentry tended not only to maintain its own privileges but to increase them and to acquire predominance over other estates by limiting the privileges which they had previously enjoyed. This design was successfully realized. The greatest difficulty was with the clergy. The gentry, however, succeeded in establishing almost all along the line with regard to the higher ecclesiastical dignities the principle that they must fall only to men of gentle birth. This secured to the gentry a predominant influence over the ecclesiastical estate. They further gained the limitation of the church in extending its possessions to their detriment. The power to create new monasteries and convents was limited, the transfer of real estate to the church became impossible, even that of movables was partly checked, and so forth.

The gentry also vigorously interfered in the towns and with the

estate of townsmen, and a growing intrusion into urban affairs began. This brought about the almost entire annihilation of the autonomy and self-government of the private townships which belonged to lords. Through the sheriffs, moreover, the gentry began to extend control over the town finances. By publishing county price-lists they endeavoured to exert a corresponding influence over the town trade. Further, by creating the so-called jurisdiction of the gentry in the town, who by royal privilege were entirely exempt from the rules of urban law, they disorganized the life of the place.

At this time, likewise, the estate of peasants lost the basis of the autonomy which it had hitherto enjoyed. Patrimonial jurisdiction over the village population was introduced, and exercised immediately by the lords or by their deputies. In time, peasant servitude arose. These facts bear witness to the ever-growing interference of the estate of gentry in the internal affairs of other estates. This caused the disappearance of the hitherto binding principle of equality between the estates, based on the non-interference by one in the internal affairs of another. Thus the gentry secured a marked predominance over the others.

Not only in social organization but also in the political sphere, the estate of gentry succeeded in gaining ascendancy over the royal power. What has been said of the Diet, of the Dietines, of the judicial tribunals and of the organization of the offices bears sufficient witness to the powerful and decisive influence of the gentry as the only factor represented in these institutions. This period is therefore rightly termed by many authors that of the Commonwealth of the Gentry.

### THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION

The Catholic faith was the confession which possessed full rights in the old Polish Commonwealth. This fact was more than once confirmed by legislation, as for example in 1766 or in the Cardinal Laws of 1768. The relation of the Catholic Church to the state was regulated by several papal bulls. From 1589, the king possessed wide powers of appointment to episcopal sees, and, from 1736, to the principal abbacies.

Catholics of the Greek rite, the so-called Uniats, and those of the Armenian rite, enjoyed equal privileges, but their bishops did not sit in the Senate. The Armenians were self-governing in accordance with privileges of their own.

In relation to other confessions, the principle of religious toleration

was binding. Religious freedom, with reference to the dissidents and the suppression of mutual religious wars, was accepted as basic in the resolutions of the Warsaw Confederation of 1573, and subsequently introduced into the articles of Henri de Valois, passing thence into the *pacta conventa* and sworn to by every king-elect. To the Eastern Orthodox Church freedom had been guaranteed earlier by the Jagiellons.

During the seventeenth century a gradual departure began from this basic conception which Polish culture had created. Finally, the constitution of 1717 and several of later date introduced limitations both for Protestant and Orthodox with regard to public worship and eligibility for service as deputy (1736). The Reppin-led Diet (1768) passed resolutions to the contrary effect. Harsher treatment was extended only to the Arians who in 1658 were forbidden to remain within the frontiers of the commonwealth. The Tartars, as Mussulmen, were limited partly by being declared ineligible for office, and partly by being debarred from the purchase of estates, a limitation which was removed in the last days of the Republic.

The Jews had their own self-governing organization. Its basis was the commune or Kahal. At the head of the Kahal stood the Jewish elders (*parnassim* or *rassim*). From the days of Batory "*waady*", general meetings of the Jews from the whole state, took place with increasing frequency, coinciding with fairs at Lublin or Jaroslav. From 1623, Lithuania had *waady* of its own. Such meetings were concerned with the question of the autonomy of the several communes, and acted as intermediary in questions between the Jews and the state. Among these was the distribution of the burden of taxation, which was imposed upon the Jewish body as a whole.

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When we proceed to a synthesis of the development of Polish constitutional relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we perceive that certain constitutional principles, which were binding at the end of the sixteenth and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, became warped, thus causing a corresponding deformity in the most important parts of the structure. The deformed constitution must inevitably function differently, with unhappy consequences for the life of the state as a whole.

The Diet lost the most important basis of its action, the principle of equality between the estates. This led to renewed decentralization of legislative powers. The Dietines, especially the Economic, lost the

boundary of their activity and embraced in part the legislative function and even the executive. The Senators-Resident acquired a decisive voice, and so the executive power. They became still more independent of the king, creating a lack of a proper basis for the administration of the state. Decentralization of the finances followed; separate county treasuries were created; in its organization and numbers the army was enfeebled.

The phenomena which have been cited suffice to show how certain hitherto existing institutions had become warped. The opinion of society—witness Leszczyński, Konarski and the Czartoryski party—perceived this more and more. Hence it became possible to set about reform, which in great measure meant return to the previous line of development, but was for some time kept back by the deformity which certain institutions had suffered. New reforms must do away with the disproportion between various social and political arrangements which had taken root in Poland. Such reforms were successfully put forward by the so-called Four Years' Diet (1788-92).

The reformation by the Four Years' Diet, and especially the Constitution of the Third of May, produced new constitutional foundations. The contractual conception of the state completely disappeared. Instead of a contract between king and society, we have an irresponsible king to whom society may not refuse obedience. The hereditary principle replaced that of elective monarchy.

Both in the Crown and in Lithuania the chief government about the king was composed of the so-called Guard of the Laws (*Straż praw*), a ministry consisting of the Primate and five ministers, those for internal affairs (police), foreign affairs, war, finance and justice, while the Marshal of the Diet had an advisory voice. The king was not, as in the case of the Permanent Council, subordinated to the will of the Guard. On the other hand, the king's ordinances were not valid without the signature of a minister. The minister who signed must be responsible to the Diet. Thus the irresponsibility of the king was checked by the principle of ministerial responsibility to the Diet.

The king was entitled to name the members of the Guard from among all the ministers. This nomination must be repeated every two years, so that the king might have regard to persons conforming to the programme of the majority of the Diet—a parliamentary ministry.

Thus the reforms of the Four Years' Diet also laid new foundations for the Polish Diet. Above all the principle was recognized that the deputy elected to the Diet represented the interests of the whole state, and not only those of his own region. Every deputy was free to

follow his own conscience, and was not merely bound by the instructions of his Dietine. Such an overthrow of the instructions of the Dietines necessarily destroyed the basis of the *liberum veto*. At the same time the formation of confederations was forbidden. The Diet must be always ready, that is, the deputies when elected did not lose their mandates at its close, but kept them for the next two years against the need of the summons of an extraordinary Diet. A constituent Diet must assemble every twenty-five years to effect a revision of the constitution.

Questions belonging to the competence of the Diet fell into two groups, general laws and Diet resolutions. General laws comprised constitutional statutes and those styled civil or criminal or for permanent taxation. The second group contained declarations of war, treaties of peace and other international treaties, budgets, taxes voted for a single occasion, and so forth. General laws and Diet resolutions must be voted in a different fashion.

For taking resolutions the votes of the Senators and Deputies were counted together, while on general laws the two Houses voted separately. If the Senate did not favour the proposal, the House of Deputies could reintroduce it in the following Diet. If they then accepted it, the Senate could not again oppose, and the resolution became law.

In both cases, therefore, the Senate might be outvoted by the House of Deputies. The Senate lost its former status of equality in the Diet and became a secondary factor. The king likewise did not gain from the reforms of the Four Years' Diet a status of equality. He acquired only two votes in the Senate, so that it was not difficult to outvote him there, and still less in the House of Deputies. In the sphere of the Polish Diet, therefore, the resolutions of the Four Years' Diet did not return to that basis of the equality of estates on which the structure of the former Diet was erected. The principle of the supremacy of the House of Deputies was introduced.

The reforms of the constitution of the Third of May and of the Four Years' Diet, which laid the foundations of the new Polish state and society, were effected not by way of social revolution, nor under any kind of pressure from the lower classes claiming their rights, but by way of a gradual and steady evolution of this estate, which with goodwill and conscientiously resigned its exclusive influence and importance. These reforms were based on the old traditions of the state, profiting at the same time also, with moderation, by the watchwords of the French Revolution. The reforms in great measure got rid of

those constitutional defects which in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had arisen in the organization of the state. Into that of society they restored the old equality between the several estates. They created a legal protection for the peasant class, restored self-government to the towns, abolished the control over them by the gentry, and admitted the estate of townsmen to a certain share in the central organs. In the state organization they reformed the Diet, did away with the *liberum veto*, and above all created a strong government with a hereditary and irresponsible king at its head.

In her historic development, Poland passed along the more toilsome way, that of gentry-democracy, not of absolute government. Hence beyond doubt she was called on to conquer great national difficulties. Gentry-democracy demanded a greater number of individuals provided with the appropriate training, with real political intelligence and more developed character.

After a time of mutual struggles and internal weakness, however, Poland overcame these difficulties. But then the principle of "might is right", which gained a place in international affairs, deflected the course of history and made it impossible to complete the new epoch which the Polish state had begun.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOCIAL LIFE BEFORE THE PARTITIONS

THE first years of the eighteenth century saw the new age of Peter the Great in Russia, and the founding of the Kingdom of Prussia. In the lands between them the visitor would have discovered a curious and even pitiful state of affairs. In Poland there was both a nation and a state; but the former, by its own free will, was an aristocracy of a handful of magnates and a few hundred thousand squires, while the latter, though preserving the forms of constitutional monarchy, had lost its power to function. The aristocracy was a purely agricultural one, patriarchal in structure; with the strength growing out of family discipline and loyalties, but with all the weaknesses as well. Intense rivalries between the great families, and the rejection of the ties and duties devolving on the citizen as such, resulted in a paralysis of the state authority on the one hand, and of state effectiveness on the other.

The reducing of the once free peasantry and yeomanry into serfdom, and the stripping of the once flourishing towns of their wealth and influence, had been completed early in the seventeenth century. These misfortunes made the collapse of the power of the state the more disastrous for all concerned. Both of them were fraught with the gravest results, and they must be laid squarely at the door of the landed gentry. In the one case these gentlemen wanted to have the villagers irrevocably bound to them and their acres, without allowing anyone the right of intervention; in the other they desired to prevent the mounting threat of the wealthier burghers, whether to their own monopoly of the franchise or to their ownership of the land. The result was a one-class commonwealth, the gravest fault of whose members was that they recognized common responsibilities very unwillingly, only indeed when compelled to do so.

One of the Radziwiłłs was to nail this sign over the entrance gate to his grand park, and to boast of it publicly: "The King is king in Warsaw, but I am Lord in Nieśwież!" Small wonder that Peter the Great, returning from his study of the "civilized" and disciplined West to the as yet undisciplined plains of Poland, did not hesitate to call these landed proprietors, "barbarians". An odd comment, coming from such a source.

With the bonds of civic institutions thus dissolving, men might have placed their hope of succour in the Church. Had it not won striking victories over all efforts at reform, and saved the nation for the mother faith? Were not the highly competent and devoted Jesuit Fathers in full charge of the things of the spirit? Surely there were no better guides for the common man. Unfortunately, the "preceptors of Europe", with their once-for-all perfected and stereotyped *ratio studiorum*, wanted too much. Their greatest apostle, Peter Skarga, advocated *absolutum dominium* as a remedy for the evils of his day, and won for himself the title "tyrant of souls". Nothing was less to the liking of the average nobleman. The reader knows how, within half a century of Skarga's death, by the action of Siciński in 1652, the "precious freedom" of the individual citizen was consecrated as the highest good. The landed gentry were, indeed, proud of Catholicism, readier to die for it than to live it, and not a few among them were truly pious. But their religion was mostly a veneer—a matter of lip-service; and their devotionism did little to restrain wild conduct, or to inspire them to the nobler sort. Part of the blame could fairly be laid on the clergy. Where, three generations earlier, the bishops had given the nation statesmen, thinkers and apostles of reform, there was now a blank. An age followed, during which Poland ceased to keep in touch with all the best that western Europe was doing and thinking, and withdrew into herself. Having escaped the terrible experiences of neighbour nations, she saw in it all the hand of God; and people went on to thank Him that they were not as other men! One cannot call by the name "nationalism" the complacent attachment to all that was known as Sarmatism (from the Latin name for the Vistula region), which Konarski was to discover as the hardest obstacle to progress in his path. The estimable gentry recalled with pride the fact that Poland, in contrast with France, had dealt with the religious issue without civil strife; and that she had been a haven of peace during the frightfulness of the Thirty Years' War. The pity of it was that these same gentry seemed to learn nothing, (either from this spectacle of misery at their door,<sup>1</sup> or from their own generation of horrors after 1648. Their only logic of life found expression in the tragic, because fatuous boast, "For lack of order Poland stands!"

## I

"The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", says Brueckner, "represent in Polish history a single whole: the rising, noontide and setting of the glorious Commonwealth—that of the landed aristocracy. With



the Peace of Karlowitz (1699), Poland ceased to play an active part in European life, and lapsed into the part of object." It is significant that, while the health and wealth of the towns were slipping into decay, the land-barons were everywhere building for their families magnificent and costly mansions. Not Casimir the Great "found Poland timber, but left it marble", but rather these gentlemen of the seventeenth century. Sigismund Augustus had lived with the simplicity of a hermit, at best of a huntsman, and only his stables were extensive and imposing. A hundred years later every nobleman felt that he ought to have a palace. "The wealthier gentry were trying to keep up with the magnates", says Łoziński, "the magnates in their turn, with the Monarch." As time went on this trend toward display got worse. Czartoryski would set out from Puławy for his Volhynian estates with four hundred horses and fourteen camels in his train; and on his way to "the waters" in Bardyów he needed a hundred wagons as escort!

Nor was this "conspicuous spending" (in Veblen's phrase) either the expression of superior culture and taste, or a proof of the same. In the majority of cases it was wanton display. Alike the vast country residences, built now no longer for defence but rather as houses to live in, and their magnificent furnishings; the costly internal decorations—gilded ceilings, silk or tooled leather and tapestry hangings; the extravagant silver and gold services: alike the companies of courtiers, recruited mostly from the lesser gentry, and the throngs of servants of all kinds—one and all were out of keeping with the real demands of the hour. The same could be said of the spacious and exotic gardens and parks that were the fashion in the eighteenth century, to become the heritage of the small townsmen of the liberated Poland.

Master architects were brought from Italy to create sumptuous homes for a few people, each one vying with his neighbour. The story was that one such mansion had a window for every day of the year, a room for every week, a hall for every month, and a tower for every quarter. Italian canons of taste gave way in time to Saxon, and these were superseded by the all-powerful fashions of the France of the Enlightenment. The fame of the Polish *grands seigneurs* was such that Italian shops produced a specially fine kind of goods known as *roba per Polonia*. [The pleasures of the table were not forgotten, and they tended to degenerate into brutishness. "Our tables", says one contemporary, "are like maps. On them you must find all the particular things each country possesses." With the eating went excessive indulgence in strong drink. "As drunk as a Pole" became a proverb in Western Europe. The example of King Augustus the Strong was

followed all too readily by those around him. "Quand Auguste buvait, la Pologne était ivre!" In notes and descriptions by French visitors of what they saw in Poland, we can detect an amazement that betrayed their sense of the incongruous. A single example will suffice. The Białystok palace of the Branickis, only one of several they possessed, had stables for 200 steeds, but there were only 170 books to be found in the library.

The towns of Poland were just emerging successfully from a long struggle to assimilate their non-Polish elements, when the blow fell on them of the edicts of 1565. In the interests of the landed proprietors and of their mostly foreign commercial agents, the privileges so long enjoyed by the townsmen, and conceded as their right by every civilized state in Europe, were rudely cut off. To the mischief thus done, there succeeded, after 1648, the fearful war years, whose depredations were always harder to make good in the city than in the open country. By the end of the century "only ruins were left"; with here and there "a few gasping citizens, who had not been rooted out". During these decades such efforts as were made to preserve a measure of community and economic stability were exposed to the attacks of three special foes: the squires, the *starostas*, and the ubiquitous Jews. It was the "private" towns, i.e. those founded on the broad lands of the magnates, that the lord of the manor had particularly at his mercy. Their properties were seized, their rights of trading cut off, their people driven out. Those situated on the royal domains came to dread the hand of the king's sheriffs, or more often their deputies; whose office became so notorious as an instrument for destruction that King Stanislas Augustus was later to suggest the handing over of the Bastille to the *starostas*, i.e. intendants of the domains, as the surest way of getting it "destroyed". "The ruin of the cities is so universal and so evident", wrote Antoni Potocki in a public manifesto in 1744, "that with the single exception of Warsaw the first ones in the country can well be compared to caves of robbers." From decade to decade, says Ptaśnik, "the Polish burghers disappeared, and the throng of Jewry gathered and multiplied".

Some cities, like the picturesque Biecz, vanished altogether. The majority were reduced to shadows, with a score or at best a hundred families in them. Often enough these dwelt in the cellars of once splendid mansions, eking out a bitter existence. Tarnów, to take a single example, had known glorious days; but the first ten years of the eighteenth century saw four successive armies—Saxon, Russian, Swedish, and again Russian, each quartered for months in its streets.

In 1737 it could not find the money to pay a head-tax levy of 1500 złotys. "A few wretched householders remained, but not a single Christian merchant." Much the same kind of thing could be found in Lublin, in Poznań, in Radom, in Cracow, Lwów, or Wilno. When the *Commissiones Boni Ordinis*, created by Stanislas Augustus after 1765, set about their task, the sights that met them were appalling. "Every street an open field, every square a desert." To make things harder, the main thoroughfares of the larger centres were so blocked up with the wreckage of fallen buildings, that a campaign of clearing away the debris had to be organized before anything new could be built.

Warsaw has been named as an exception to the general rule, but this was more apparent than real. Since the reign of Sigismund III, when it became the capital, Warsaw had extended its boundaries, growing out of sight and mind. From something like 35,000 souls, it came to have at the end of our period three times that number. But the newcomers did not belong to the "town"—there were in fact two Warsaws. There was the ancient city, nestling within its walls on the high bank of the Vistula, and overlooked by the cathedral and the castle. Outside this, there were settlements which, at first casual, came in time to be permanent, and soon outnumbered the burghers proper. They were the creation of the magnates and nobility from the country, each of whom built his dwelling in a sort of enclosure; where he felt safe during the sessions of the Diet. Their *raison d'être* was then political, they were crowded in season, and were mostly empty at other times. Besides these grew up others, the properties of the Orders of the Church. Called "jurisdictions", these settlements declined to pay any taxes, and held themselves far from any civic control. They became a fruitful source of trouble, and set up fierce opposition to the plans of the Commission, which proposed in 1767 to crown the work of rebuilding the capital, begun by the Saxon kings, by uniting the community in a single whole. Nor was any solution found, until the Congress of the Towns had done its work in 1789-90, and the Constitution of the next year had altered the status of the burghers for good..

With this economic desolation of the cities, there was bound to go a tragic decline of all that pertained to the mind and the spirit. History teaches us that the forces making for cultural and scientific values, and the institutions necessary to make these operative, are essentially the product of urban conditions. Without cities no schools, no libraries, no laboratories. Religion may flourish in solitude, but learning never. One man learns from another, one mind inspires another. Of this, Poland offers a conspicuous example at the time we are considering.

In the barely vegetating urban communities of our period, there was no hope of the intellectual intercourse that had made Cracow great in the days of Rey and Modrzewski. While the townsmen of Western Europe, led by the example of a Strassbourg or a Geneva, or the gallant cities of the Netherlands, were multiplying the material and moral wealth of their nations, or the burghers of London were helping to win the battle for civic liberties against the Stuarts, the very reverse was happening in Poland. The consequences were dire. (Schools did exist, but according to one pattern, and that moribund) The printing-press did function, but stern censorship robbed it of any chance of serving the public; condemning it to the issuing of devotional tracts, colourless mouthings about the sciences, or even arrant nonsense. The university of Cracow, the proud mother of so many institutions of learning, had become sterile, both in ideas and in methods. The once brilliant schools of the Protestants had long ceased to exist, and the Arians were now in exile.

What economic misery did not accomplish in the way of crippling culture, religious fanaticism was eager to complete. The wish of Zamoyski, to see in the unity of the Faith the guarantee of a united nation, was sincere. What might have been the fairest of gardens, was turned into a valley of dry bones. The *ratio studiorum* may have been the best thing of its kind in 1599, and the Jesuit Fathers doubtless meant well in securing the monopoly of educational guidance in Poland. But the net result of their services was a sorry one. Nowhere, neither at home nor in school, (did the oncoming youth learn the simplest facts of corporate living, nor the fundamental human excellences.) As we shall see below, they learned everything else except what the daily round demanded: and the charge brought in later times that the blame for the downfall of Poland must be shared by the Order has never been effectively disposed of. Too much concerned with the upper classes, too anxious to get the rulers of the nation in their power, the Fathers neglected the masses, did nothing for the ignorant and the oppressed, and never lifted a hand either to ease the lot of the villager, or to stem the tide of ruin in the cities.

## II

To the lot and the misfortunes of the villagers we must now turn. Surely, if ever a country needed a prosperous and enlightened yeomanry, it was Poland, devoid as she was of natural frontiers, and committed to man-power alone for defence in time of need.

What is more, the conditions and prospects were favourable enough, had there only been good-will and wisdom in high places. We have seen that there was not. Combined jealousy and fear kept the gentry from making use of the masses in the bearing of arms; for the simple reason that with this was understood to go the right of franchise. Add to this the zeal with which the land baron watched over his prerogatives on his own estates; including the patrimonial administration of justice, which made him lord of the life and death of his subjects. Partly with the help of legislation, but even more by his own harsh dealings, he was able to deprive what had been virtually a free peasantry both of their social status and of their material well-being. The destitution that ensued may not have been worse than could be found elsewhere in Europe, but it was unworthy of any Christian country. What is more it was unnecessary. The burdens of serfdom were augmented as the years went on, and the one way of escape seemed to be flight to the great open spaces of the Eastern Marches. Hence the succession of legislative efforts right through the seventeenth century to stop this, but all in vain. The wretched villagers knew nothing of the King's justice, which had come to be a power in France or in England. They were at the mercy of their landlords. "Had it not been", says Ulanowski, "for the quartering of troops and their maintenance, none of the people could have perceived that behind the village and the manor-house there was something greater; that the Commonwealth was there, a powerful state, composed of thousands of villages and manor-houses."

There were, of course, exceptions. Even before 1700, and still more after the terrible wars that followed that year, voices were raised calling attention to the condition of things in the rural communities, and demanding reform. It is from these documents that we get the clearest picture of what serfdom had become. Broadly speaking the conditions in the western provinces were less revolting than those in the east, with the exception of the fertile lands of Ukraina; though even here the saturation point of population was reached, and severities practised which called forth fierce revolts, of the sort Poland never experienced. In the Crown lands one found serfs wearing boots, in Lithuania they went mostly barefoot. So too, on the royal domains they suffered less, as a rule, than on the private estates; if only because there were courts to appeal to, which the patrimonial system did not permit. On the Church lands also, the lot was mostly a better one, for here the cottager could own his home and his cattle. Everywhere he was *adscriptus glebæ*, and the *corvée* lay both on him and his family. But he could

also be bought and sold—of this we have sufficient examples, and in the case of absentee landlords, he was at the mercy of the overseer's whip. Only in the uplands of the Carpathians did the older traditions of a free and land-owning peasantry survive into modern times; and it is there that the investigator must go to-day to recover what there is left of this happier tradition.

In the light of all this, one is not surprised to find a serious decline of population in Poland. Montesquieu had a place for that country alongside Turkey, among the "unpeopled" ones of Europe. Large areas had lapsed into wilderness. At best only seven million inhabitants remained—one-third the population of France. The shrewd observer Rieule wrote, somewhat later, as follows:

The area of Poland is to that of England as four to one, the population of England to that of Poland as eight to four. Both countries feed their people, and they export the same amount of produce.

It is notable that the call to compassion on the exploited masses, as well as to a re-ordering of this unhappy state of things, came insistently from the Arians as a group. There are more examples of it in the poetry of the time than anywhere else. Szymorowicz had set an example in an earlier generation. Starowolski was to sound the demand "that the state look into the matter, to see that the nobles did not slay their subjects at will, or rob them of their goods". The famous oath taken by John Casimir in Lwów, during the struggle with the Swedes, admitted the injustices of the system, and pledged the sovereign "to see that his people were set free from unjust burdens and oppression." This promise, however, was never put into effect; and the indictment brought by the Poznanian magnate (and traitor), Krzysztof Opaliński, in his poem *The Burden of the Peasants*, was not too severe. Calling the lot they endured worse than pagan, he wrote:

In Heaven's name, my Poles, have you gone mad?  
For goods, for wealth, for living, for your harvests  
You've but your serfs to thank. 'Tis they who feed you -  
And yet they only know you for your harshness.

Among others, three men of distinction echoed these sentiments in prose in the eighteenth century: the exiled king, Leszczyński, the ambitious leader Stanislas Poniatowski, and the less known gentleman-religionist of Poznań, Stefan Garczyński. The king's book, *A Free Voice Ensuring Freedom*, appeared in French and Polish. The author was a philosopher rather than a statesman. It showed the debt of the

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nation to the tillers of the soil, but put their claims on a new plane: "God endowed men with liberty, without difference of station: by what right can anyone take it from them?" It called for the right of free contract, thus conceding equality of legal status. Leszczyński's evidence shows that both the serf and the magnate will profit from this.

Poniatowski, in *A Landowner Talks with his Neighbour*, urged above all relief from the grievous burden of taxation, as the first step toward recovery. He vigorously indicted the Church, whose indifference to the needs of its flock was as distasteful as were its distorted notions of value.

He who follows the plough in the sweat of his toil, often in greater poverty than the begging friar, certainly has his reward. He is as sure of salvation as the hermit who renounces the world and all its possessions.

As a practical measure, the author proposed a petition to the Pope, to get a large number of the then observed saints' days removed from the calendar; thus reducing the excuses for idleness in the masses.

I have called Garczyński a "religionist" for his habit of citing scripture at every turn to prove his point. The *Anatomy of the Commonwealth* is naïve, even fantastic, in places; but the author's main contention echoes those who went before him, and leads straight to the greater work of his redoubtable fellow countryman Staszic, a generation later. His cry was for schools; and he could point to what Frederick II was then doing in near-by Prussia. "Why cannot we have our boys learning trades also?" Then a warning: "God will not let those live long, who oppress their villagers!"

### III

"The history of the Saxon period", says Brueckner, "is seen to be that of a few families and their quarrellings." This somewhat extreme description of "the noblemen's commonwealth" which Poland had become, is not as unfair as it might seem. Not only did this nobility consider themselves "beyond good and evil", not only did many of them show open contempt for state institutions like the High Courts of Justice, not only did they make the machinery of legislation into the laughing-stock of Europe, but they combined all this into a system, and reinforced it with a philosophy of life. The name for it, Sarmatism, has been noted already. Just because it was so serious an obstacle to all efforts at reform, we must glance at its essential features, as set out by observers at that time. They can be seen all over the pages of the

seventeenth century adventurer Jan Pasek, whose diary is a priceless document for the historian; or from another angle, in the no less valuable diary of the arch-conservative Abbé Kitowicz, a century later. One of the finest portraits, however, is that given us by the satirist Krasicki, of the country squire Pan Podstoli:

My father, my grandfather, and possibly even his sire—whom I did not know, were born here, spent their days here, and died here. Everyone of them was like me: he could scarcely spell out a sentence, and could only use a pen to sign his name when he gave a Jew a contract for some concession. But they lived long, and were healthy in body, just as I am, by the grace of God. My children will also be healthy, without schooling. I shall not send them away, for they will only get their heads turned; and might even in the sequel be driving me out. Even if they did not, it would be bad for the young to have more intellect than their parents.

Here we have on the one hand thorough-going philistinism, on the other vanity of vanities. Krasicki's younger contemporary, the clever dramatist Zablocki, about whom more will be said in a subsequent chapter, gave the name "Sarmatism" to his most successful comedy, in which the foibles and vices of the age he grew up in were tellingly portrayed. The hope of better things is there, nevertheless—in the shape of the younger generation.

Zablocki grew up at the end of our period. Long before he was born the spirit of resignation, even of despair, had made itself evident in Polish life. People saw the accumulation of evils, but felt that nothing could be done. Lubomirski's *De Vanitate Consiliorum*, published in 1699, was shot through with pessimism. The evil days are at hand, the years have drawn nigh, "desire" fails. A Stoic apathy is the only refuge. Nevertheless there were men even then growing up who were to give their lives to challenge that pessimism; just as they were to spend their days in rooting out the ignorance and indifference that were its sources. The work of one of these, the Piarist Father, Stanislas Konarski, who was born in central Poland of middle class parents in 1700, will demand our attention. It may be argued that he was the mouthpiece of his generation, and not the builder of a new social fabric. We shall not deny that the events of 1688 left their mark on Europe as a whole; or that the achievements of Newton and the writings of Locke were to usher in a new age. The teachings of Montesquieu and the work of Charles Rollin were bound to radiate light, and some of it would sooner or later have reached even the dark corners of Poland. But the fact remains that this could hardly have happened without the vision and courage, as well as the energy and perseverance,



which make of an everyday member of the Piarist Order "the wisest of all the Poles", and the greatest single force in the regeneration of his people.

#### IV

The Piarist Fathers had been brought into Poland by Wladyslaw IV, and soon made themselves useful in their chosen field—that of elementary education. But they had ambitions to go farther, and teach High School youth: a field which for long had been the special preserve of the Jesuit. The result was an open conflict, in which society was roundly in favour of what had been; but not a few wiser people saw the need for change. The grip possessed by the Jesuit Fathers on the minds of the upper classes may seem surprising, but it was made the easier by the threat to both the State and the Church from the rising power of Russia on the east, and the fast mounting influence of Prussia on the west. There Orthodoxy, here Lutheranism—and from both a will to interfere in Poland in defence of the "Dissidents". Hence the use of the ablest of the Church Orders, and the undesirability of making too much of its faults. Then we must add the calamities of the early years of the eighteenth century, which drove simple people to an excess of other-worldliness, an expression of which is seen in the "coronation" in 1717 of Our Lady of Czestochowa in the presence of immense throngs of pilgrims—only the first of a number of such ceremonies in all parts of the country. Religious feelings were running high, as was seen in the Toruń tragedy in 1724.

In the midst of all this Konarski grew up, going from school in Piotrków, to the Podoliniec college in the Carpathians, and finally as "tutor" to the Warsaw college. From here he was sent in 1724 to Rome to the *Collegium Nazarenum*, where he came into touch with some of the best minds of the day, and made his mark as a teacher of mathematics. Following this, he was in Paris from 1729–31, where the writings of Montesquieu and his sympathizers were the daily bread of the schools. With this unique equipment he returned to Poland, resolved already, one may surmise, to see something done for the saving of the nation. For some years the way was barred, owing in part to public unrest, in part to his personal connexions with the Tarlo family. Leisure time was used to begin one of the biggest projects of its kind Poland had undertaken: the compiling of a compendium of Polish Law, in its historical sequence, *Volumina Legum*, of which the first volume was Konarski's work. This study proved of the greatest value to the coming reformer, since it taught him how different things had once been, and how sadly they had degenerated. A scarcely less

useful experience was his accompanying the Polish delegate Ożarowski to Paris in 1735, in an effort to get outside help for the cause of Leszczyński: an experience that was full of disillusionment, and taught the Piarist Father that only those are helped who help themselves.

In 1740 the opportunity came, and with the approval of his superiors in the Order—though by no means of the rank and file—he started his famous *Collegium Nobilium* in Warsaw, a High School for the sons of gentlemen, somewhat on the lines of the *Ritterakademien* of Saxony. For fifteen years, through fair and foul weather, he was to give the major part of his time and strength to this institution; until he saw it housed in its own fine building, and securely lodged in the mind of the public. The task was enormous, since everything had to be done. Neither men, nor money, nor students, nor yet popular understanding of the need, were at hand. Worst of all, there was no scientific equipment in the country, nor were there suitable textbooks to work with. The chief motive of the College—to put training in modern languages alongside the classics, and to make mathematics and the sciences an integral part of the courses—was only part of Konarski's insight into the first need of his times: to make teaching serve the pupils for life, not draw them away from life.

As part of this campaign to revolutionize the mind of the interested public, he published in 1741 a scathing indictment of the spoken and written speech of his day, *De Emendandis Eloquentiae Vitiis*. Though brought up in it, he had learned to abominate the bombastic unnaturalness of the language men used in private and public dealings, flowery in the extreme, a veritable *rococo* in words. To make matters worse, the vicious practice of mixing Latin phrases in at every turn with Polish, made a monster of what was meant to be a simple instrument of thought. Finally, in public relations, panegyric had come to be the fashion, and the least breath of criticism, even though truth might demand it, was taboo. Konarski's treatise exposed all this ruthlessly, heaping ridicule on its absurdities, and it evoked a storm of protest, chiefly from the Jesuits, of course, who were the sponsors of the things thus arraigned, but hardly less from his own colleagues. A few years however saw a complete change, and the year 1741 may be said to mark the beginning of a new day in the field of school-books for Poland.

Of the novelties introduced in the *Collegium Nobilium*, and the way they were first condemned, but very soon adopted by the other Orders teaching in Poland, we can say little here. Attention to the physical needs of youth was shown in the provision for riding, and even for

out-door games. What already existed in the schools, viz. the use of dramatics as an exercise, was developed by Konarski into something entirely new: and the introduction of modern French plays was to bring on the school the charge of secularism. So, too, the long-existing school-parliaments were transformed; chiefly in the direction of relating them to the actual problems of the time, and using them for training in civic virtues. The school fees were high, and the number of students was not meant to be large; but the influence the new school came to exert in public affairs was already being felt before Konarski's death in 1773. Several of the outstanding leaders of the dark Partition period were trained in the Piarist College.

Precisely this was what that institution was meant to achieve. Its founder made this clear in his address in 1754, on the occasion of the dedication of the new building. His theme was not learning, but living, and the keynote of it "Never should we despair of the state!" The whole address was a sermon to the assembled parents and dignitaries on the ways and means to get a well-ordered society, rather than a talk on education. Of course the proper training of the young was set forth as the one and only means to this high end, and the responsibility of the parent for this was driven home unsparingly. Nevertheless, no one knew better than Konarski that even good and wise citizens cannot fulfil their function in a social order which moved on wrong principles. He therefore turned at once to attack openly the vicious political system of Poland, the centre of which lay in the *liberum veto*. For years, he had been at work on a study of the whole evil, treating it both historically and by scientific analysis. At last in 1760 there appeared the first of four little volumes, *A Way to Effective Counsels*, which was to be the greatest political treatise of the eighteenth century in Poland. The details of this struggle, absorbing Konarski's attention for years, do not belong here. Yet the central fact concerns us deeply, that the unfortunate political system which brought Poland to her condition of helplessness in the face of predatory neighbours was the product of a wrong philosophy of life: the putting of individual liberty before the claims of the common good, and the absolute unwillingness of the Polish noble to admit that things were not going well in the best of all possible worlds. This conceit, this complacency about everything, was Konarski's chief obstacle.

That we Poles should consider ourselves wiser and more prudent than all the human race, than any ancient or modern commonwealth, would amount to no less than an unheard-of presumption, which would only make us ridiculous before the world. Let us govern ourselves like sensible people, as the rest of the race does! Have done with pretences that we are

better than others! The argument that things are of one sort abroad but of another in Poland has so little sense as to be no argument at all. The God of nature did not seek out a different clay or a different model when he made Poles, from what he used for Englishmen, or Swiss, or Belgians.

Plain speaking of this kind could not make the author popular, and the surprising thing is how much recognition he got in high places, almost from the start. The book was acclaimed as a "Wake up, Poland!" appeal, and from the appearance of Volume IV there were no more "exploded" Diets. In general one may say that from 1750 a turn for the better was evident. Konarski had carried out a complete modernizing of all the schools of the Piarists in the country, and the other teaching Orders had no choice but to come into line. The new spirit made itself felt among the older generation also. As early as 1744, at the call of Józef Załuski, a circle was formed in Warsaw for the organized buying of foreign books, and for the circulation of the best periodicals from abroad. A few years later a sort of Academy of Arts and Sciences was founded. True, the enterprise was not a success, for the time was not yet ripe. Others were more fortunate, and among them must be named the opening to the public in 1748 of the renowned Załuski Library.

## V

Józef Jędrzej Załuski is one of the outstanding figures of his time. Few men surpassed him, whether in the range of his interests or in the energy he showed in pursuing them. It was he who urged the historical studies on Konarski, after his return from abroad in 1731, which brought into being the first of the *Volumina Legum*. It was he who, a decade later, was encouraging the son of a Warsaw burgher family, A. M. Trotz, who taught Polish in the university of Leipzig, to prepare his French-German-Polish dictionary—the first of its kind; and made possible its publication in 1763–64. On completing his theological studies, in Rome and Paris, he became the envoy of King Stanislas Leszczyński in the Eternal City for some years. Then he settled in Warsaw, and devoted himself chiefly to the collecting and study of books. Thanks to his unflagging industry—every book and manuscript in the great library, which numbered close on 200,000 volumes, is said to have passed through his hands—there was opened for public use in Warsaw in 1747 the first institution of its kind in this part of Europe. A catalogue, prepared by Janocki, was published under the title *An Account of the Rare Books in the Załuski Library*. The founder became Bishop of Kieff in 1758, but his regard for books, about which he wrote several works of value, remained undiminished. His sub-

sequent fate at the hands of the Russian intruders, as well as that of his library, form moving episodes in the drama that was already beginning to unfold.

In the field of books and reading as such, we have to record an improvement in the middle years of the eighteenth century. A revival of interest in learning was in progress, where hitherto stagnation had prevailed. The interest of the public had at least been roused to read the now popular Almanacks. The two teaching Orders were in keen rivalry with one another, in a matter that soon proved a real service. In their earlier stages, these Almanacks contained more fancy than fact, but they did help. Times and seasons, the eclipses, abbreviated "geographies", news of family trees, led on to news about the currency and public finance. The first Citizens' Almanack had been issued in Wilno by the Jesuits in 1737. A shaft of real light was let in on dark places, when in 1749 the name and fame of Copernicus were discussed; and the newest science recognized at last the truths he had proclaimed over two centuries before.

From 1752 onward the Piarist Almanacks appeared regularly. They contained useful materials on public questions, such as the Diet and its working, the deposits of oil in the Carpathians, and "the curiosities of Physics". Echoes were sounding on the Vistula of the movement towards popular education in France.

In 1761 C  zar de Varille (a disciple of Locke and Rousseau, and an imitator of Konarski), who had been tutor to the young Sanguszkos in Lubart  w, published his *Compendium Polonicum seu brevis dissertatio de variis Polonici imperii vicibus*, which was soon to appear in a Polish version by the Jesuit Father Bohomolec. Here, for the first time, says Smole  ski, "the author connects political history with the progress of internal relations"; he drew his argument "not from theories of his own making, but from the facts and experiences of the past".

By this time, in another field—that of journalism, distinct progress had been made. Already in 1729 the Piarist Fathers had begun to publish the *Polish Courier*. Eleven years later it was taken over by the Jesuits, and in time re-named the *Warsaw Courier*. The more pretentious *Monitor* was founded in 1764. This was to prove itself a power in the nation during troubled years. The *spiritus movens* of the journal was the same Father Bohomolec, of whom mention has been made above. He was to win lasting fame with his versions in Polish of French comedy, which were to enrich greatly the life of the National Theatre, founded in Warsaw in 1765 by King Stanislas Augustus himself. Even before this, however, the first of the Saxon kings had caused the Opera House in the capital to be rebuilt (1724); and from now on Italian,

French and German troupes were regularly in attendance. His successor added the ballet, and enlarged the building again in 1748. In all this, nevertheless, one thing was lacking—the use and encouraging of native Polish talent. This was remedied in part by the action of some of the great families, notably the Radziwiłłs in Nieśwież; who organized and carried to success the first amateur dramatics in Poland. Performances were given in the open air in summer, in the great hall in winter. A special feature of the work done in Nieśwież was the production of plays written by Princess Franciszka Radziwiłł, who was a pioneer in this important field of literature. In Podhorce, likewise, the much-loved plays of Rzewuski first saw the light. Nor should the experiments made by the Sułkowskis in Rydzyna, on the Silesian frontier, be forgotten; the more so as much of the inspiration came from there, which made the National Theatre a success after 1765.

The new reign was to initiate many new and important movements for the nation. Stanislas Augustus was an out and out disciple of the Enlightenment; so much so that a cry of alarm went up from orthodox churchmen at the innovations to be seen on all sides. Even the sober Konarski had to defend himself at the feet of the Holy Father against charges of secularization. In the year of the First Partition the Jesuit Order was abolished by Pope Benedict, and as trustees of its rich endowments a National Commission of Education was set up. Its business was to organize the first state school system in Slavonic Europe.

A word should be added, in conclusion, as to the influence of all this on private morals. Of course the picture given us by a Pasek, or by others, is not indicative of the living of the nation as a whole; but it does show to what ignorance and coarseness many had fallen. As a rebuke to this, the example of Konarski and his helpers worked wonders.

“Men try to persuade us”, wrote the Monitor in the eighties, “that the resurrection of learning has hurt manners and morals. No one can deny, however, that the coarse habits of our forefathers have almost vanished from our midst.... The passions so usual in other days as a result of ignorance and idleness have no longer a place among us. Manners have been moderated by knowledge; serving in part the ends of science, in part those of entertainment.”

An English writer of fifty years ago remarked that during the seventy years following the death of John Sobieski Poland cannot properly be said to have a history at all. The end of this state of passivity was at hand, however, and even amid the outward darkness of the Partitions, an inner light was beginning to burn which could not be put out.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST PARTITION

POLAND'S re-birth in 1918 has inevitably changed the point of view from which the historian contemplates her Partition. That eighteenth-century crime is reduced from murder to a murderous assault, from which the long-stunned victim awakens in some respects the sounder for his long torpor and loss of blood. No "happy ending", however, can justify the would-be assassins of historic Poland in what an indulgent judge could palliate only by styling it a case of lynching. The year 1772 remains with the years 1740 and 1939 among the blackest of modern times, and the verdict stands that the rape of Silesia and the dismemberment of Poland were the suicide of the old Europe. For almost a century and a half, the First Partition remained an unpunished crime. In that crime, the Poles themselves had no immediate share. History, as the previous chapters of this work have shown, cannot acquit their race of failure to create such institutions as could maintain its considerable empire. Parochialism, faction, pride, intolerance, venality—these could be charged against many of those magnates and gentry who formed "the nation". Themselves not unaffected by rivalry and ambition, the foremost Poles held that progress could be attained by the aid—and only by the aid—of Russia. It may be observed that the British government often expressed the same opinion, and that, had not a rare genius occupied the Prussian throne, the plan might have proved successful. Frederick the Great, however, was at hand to stir up strife and to profit by it, at the expense of Poland and of Russia. Thanks to him, friction in Poland kindled in 1768 a Russo-Turkish war, and, thanks again to him, Poland, rather than Turkey, paid for the restoration of European peace. Polish *protégés*, indeed, he had, but no Polish accomplices. The First Partition was wholly a foreign crime.

In the period of actual incubation, between the close of the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1770 and the spring of 1772, the Poles had no power to influence their own dismemberment. During those fatal months, Poland resembled a wounded rioter who is under operation. Were it conceivable that the surgeons could hack off his bleeding limbs for their own profit, the simile would be complete. The historian of 1772 must turn first to the condition of Poland on the

morrow of the Seven Years' War (1756-63) and then to the Polish policy of the adjacent powers, especially of Prussia and of Russia. The dynamics of Partition, he will find, are chiefly the impact of Frederick's policy upon that of Catherine. -

However tortuous and stealthy in execution, Frederick's policy after his salvation in January 1762 was simple. As a Hohenzollern, he continued to strive for the increase of their dominions. On the list of coveted provinces, Polish lands stood high. West Prussia, in particular, would unite his own detached East Prussia with the central mass of Brandenburg, and if Danzig could not be had, Elbing would form a hopeful substitute. The Poles were to him a despicable race whom it was a pleasure to humiliate and to despoil. Whenever they had no protector, he was ready to occupy as much of Poland as he could then digest. Tamed and organized by Prussia, the Polish lands would give her food and men, the agents of further conquests. Once clear of the general war, however, Prussia must adventure nothing beyond an expedition. Above all, she must stand well with Russia. Despising France, hating distant Britain, assured of the superiority of Prussian troops over Austrian, Frederick had learned to dread the valour, the resources and the invulnerability of Russia. The carnage of Zorndorf, the shattering disaster of Kunersdorf, the plundering of Berlin, these had changed his jaunty contempt for the Muscovite into a deep-seated loathing and effusive show of love. Until after the fall of Bismarck, he and his successors seldom, if ever, of their own motion took a course which might bring them to cross swords with Russia.

Frederick's resources, by comparison with those of Catherine, might be small, but in 1763 he could dispose of them with infinitely greater freedom. Then, and for a dozen years to come, the Empress of all the Russias must assume a confidence which she did not really feel. While none could question Frederick's birthright, Catherine herself professed to occupy the throne only by two dubious titles, God's choice and the people's will. Fortune, indeed, removed two dangerous rivals, her husband Peter III and Ivan VI, an earlier infant tsar. Peter's reputed son Paul, born in 1754, however, seemed to many Russians their destined Caesar, and his German mother a mere temporary regent. Some magnates, as well they might when contemplating their recent rulers, favoured a more aristocratic constitution, and of these the almost indispensable Panin was one. Hence Catherine's cue was to be more Russian than her subjects, and to prove to them, by continued beneficence and success, that



she and Russia were inseparable. Frederick might treat his Prussians with contempt, indulging his taste for French philosophy and civilization, and curtly ordering his ministers to carry out his decrees. Catherine, on the other hand, must court the army and consult the Senate of officials, meanwhile conciliating the clergy by scrupulous attention to religious rites. Herself a rationalist, tone-deaf and always pressed for time, she devoted countless hours to the music and mysticism of Russian worship, with the same patient resignation with which she reduced her abstemious diet to conform to the innumerable fasts. Towards Poland, her policy must be always and above all things Russian.

The nature of Russian policy in Poland had been shown within the Polish fief of Courland. It was to dictate to the Estates whom they should choose as Duke, and to the Duke what line of policy he should follow. Towards Poland and her King, the Russian principles of action, so Catherine held, should be the same. Her model, Peter the Great, when Poland lay at his mercy, had taken not provinces but power, guaranteeing both Polish lands and institutions. Poland to him signified chiefly a highway to the Turkish lands, and his successors were often swayed by the same need. In 1763, the death of her Saxon ruler was expected, and his successor must owe everything to Russia. A rectification of frontier was desirable: "men of our blood and faith" must not be oppressed by Polish Romanists; the "happy anarchy" safeguarded by the Polish constitution should be preserved. But, provided that the Republic acquiesced, Catherine would indulge her amiable desire to make her dependants happy. Their territory would be protected, their cherished liberties preserved, their leading men rewarded. All Poland, in short, would be a dependency of Russia, and, in the next war as in the last, might give her a military base. This policy formed a challenge not only to Prussia but to Austria, to France and to the Turks. These three powers all exercised in some sort a protectorate over Poland. France, whose Henri III had reigned at Warsaw, regarded the Poles as her clients, as were the Turks and Swedes. Austria looked upon them as fellow-Catholics governed by the pro-Austrian House of Saxony. The Turks, inevitably anti-Russian, claimed that the Peace of the Prut (1711) gave them the right to defend the *status quo* in Poland. Frederick had therefore other cards to play than those which Polish ill-usage of the Protestants and the remoteness from Russia of Polish rebels thrust into his hands. With Peter III, his fanatical admirer, he concluded an alliance which, in line with successive

agreements since 1720, bound Prussia and Russia to a common policy in Poland. After the death of Augustus III, it was agreed, they would endeavour to secure the election of a native Pole, and to keep him on the throne. At the same time they would strive to regain for the oppressed Greeks and dissenters the spiritual and temporal prerogatives of which they had been deprived. Such were among the secret articles of a treaty of mutual defence and guarantee, concluded in June 1762, for twenty years.

Within three weeks Catherine had seized the throne, declaring as her motive, second only to Peter's injury to the Russian faith, that favour to Russia's arch-enemy which this treaty had enshrined. At the same time she assumed a high imperial tone, even towards the courts of Europe, and set herself to redress the grievances and to assert the power of Russia. In Courland, Biron was restored and Prince Charles evicted, in defiance of the Austrians and Saxons. Meanwhile the campaign of 1762 made it clear that the withdrawal of Russia had left Frederick superior to his enemies, and that peace must shortly follow.

In these conditions Catherine was compelled to reflect upon Frederick's suit for an alliance. The relations between the leading powers were such that Britain and France, like Prussia and Austria, would normally take different sides. While the recent collaboration between Britain and Prussia had been abandoned, that between France and Austria badc fair to survive the war. Although French culture and French men permeated her capital, France, the France of Louis XV, the Jesuits and Choiseul, was the power that Catherine most abhorred. Its pride, its Romanism, its patronage of the Swedes and Turks, its continued interest in Poland, and its far-reaching intrigues constituted a perpetual challenge. As a German and a Russian, a Philosopher and a Greek, an Empress and a woman, she was offended by the government of France. While she admired the English, not least as the chastisers of the French, their lack of sympathy and their party politics made them ineligible as allies. Frederick alone remained. In him she saw the King whom her father had served, who had favoured her marriage, and with whom, in recent campaigns, the "Young Court" had intrigued. To her he was the regal warrior and Philosopher, always skilful in complimenting one whom he judged "eaten up with vanity", and in bargaining persuasively with her shrewd and grasping self. The King of Prussia need consult no one, male or female, cleric or layman, native or foreigner, before making or honouring his pact. In Poland his

co-operation made all things possible, while his opposition would at least make many difficult. Europe, as Catherine doubtless divined, hourly expected her fall, and common prudence bade her make sure that the most dynamic of war-lords and of statesmen would be on her side. Britain would not resent a Prusso-Russian alliance, and, since Prussia unaided could defeat the Austrian armies, the allies could laugh at France, however vast her Bourbon coalition. Secure of Prussia, Catherine need not fear the outcome of any war of revenge on the part of Sweden or the Turks. With Poland in the forefront of her mind, but conscious of her solitary state in Russia, Catherine moved slowly towards the compact of 11 April 1764, unaware that it might drive her to partition. ✓

The new treaty in effect confirmed that of Peter III, but for the term of eight years only. In substance it purchased with a general alliance Frederick's support for Stanislas Poniatowski as a candidate for the throne which, six months earlier, the death of Augustus had vacated.

Poniatowski, it has been said, possessed only one claim to reign—that he had been Catherine's lover. He was, of course, a member of "The Family", but they, the pro-Russian Czartoryskis, might have preferred a more important member of their clan. Young, poor and inexperienced, he felt himself the object of widespread dislike, unbalanced by any solid support from a band of friends. Yet, seven years earlier, he had won Catherine's heart, and few men have ever better acted majesty. Claiming on his father's side to spring from a Lombard noble line, he derived from his mother an admixture of royal Jagiello blood. His eloquence was worthy of his dignity and beauty: he had studied the theory of politics and their practice in England and in Europe: few men so well as he could form and charm a *salon*: and, as a connoisseur and a Maecenas, he claims an important place in the history of Polish art. Above all, he sincerely desired the reform and the well-being of Poland. Britons who knew him were impressed rather by his graces than by his character, but modern Polish historians, generous towards the patriotic, keep their censures for the "republican" pro-Saxon opposition.

Catherine, none the less, made no mistake in choosing Stanislas Poniatowski as her puppet king. While, with her usual benevolence towards her discarded lovers, she wished him well and was prepared to make him presents, his image had long been effaced by the martial radiance of Orlov. Poniatowski, her junior in years and in experience, had succumbed to her so completely that he always

remained in some degree her dependant. When, with his unfailing taste, he perceived the unworthiness of his situation, his moral weakness and his load of debt always forbade his abdication. Russian gold, on the other hand, could win support for his submissive policy, and Russian bayonets guard him against the rebels. With Catherine's henchman upon the throne, the loosely-knit Polish-Lithuanian state could find no natural leader, and at Warsaw the Russian ambassador would be omnipotent.

Such was the outcome of an electoral campaign which lasted some five months after the Prusso-Russian treaty. Within that space, all hindrances to the contracting powers were overcome. Of these the opposition of France and Austria was the chief, for only foreign patronage was needed to make the Poles rebel, and the Turks might well have joined the coalition. Louis XV, however, was ageing and, like his people, weary of strife, while France possessed no obvious candidate of her own. Her king, therefore, made futile demonstrations of displeasure, so that his government "without having fought, seemed to have been defeated". At Vienna, the greatest lady in Christendom, Maria Theresa, had in Joseph an ambitious son, and in Kaunitz a brilliant minister. But her dominions were no less war-weary than the French and Prussian, and power over them was shared with a traditionalist Conference of Councillors, an elaborate bureaucracy and the public opinion of several aristocracies.

The Austrian rulers, indeed, were deeply mortified at their desertion by Russia, and wounded almost beyond cure by their failure to regain Silesia, while in Poland they earnestly desired the Saxon succession. In December 1763, however, the Saxon Elector had died untimely—a benefit which Catherine ascribed to Divine favour—and no other appropriate Saxon candidate could be found. Denmark, steered by the elder Bernstorff, found her account in sedulously propitiating Russia. Opposition to the candidate of Catherine and Frederick, therefore, could arise only within the Polish State. There, indeed, the contending parties had even passed beyond the verge of civil war. When the Saxon Elector died, the impotent Hetman, Branicki, sought the crown, and the rich and powerful clans of Radziwiłł and Potocki supported him against the Family. In May 1764 the Diet of Convocation met under arms and Branicki declared it broken. The Family, however, continued it under the rules of a Confederation, and proceeded by a majority to carry through a great programme of reform. But the Russian and Prussian representatives, the aged

Kayserling and Benoit, secretly informed them that to touch the *liberum veto* would be to forfeit their support for Poniatowski, and the threat sufficed. Catherine soon boasted that she would speak to Vienna in such high terms that they would grant King Stanislas recognition.

Britain, triumphant in war and peace, had swiftly relapsed into a timid State, soliciting, both for security and trade, Russia as its sole possible ally. To her, the Poles were a remote, uncommercial, Romanizing and unreasonable nation. They ought not to be dismembered, but they interested her only as a means of showing her goodwill towards Russia.

Polish thinkers had already destroyed the basis both of history and of theory on which the *liberum veto* could stand, and it remained only to safeguard the Republic against abuse of patronage when it had been abolished. Without at least modifying a constitutional arrangement which entitled any member of a diet to nullify the whole of its proceedings, Poland could neither be, nor appear to be, a rational European State. The Russo-Prussian warning, however, compelled the Family to attempt piecemeal reform. At their instance, the Confederation under their own leadership was prolonged indefinitely, and with it the practice of decision by a majority. This body resolved that in future only a Catholic Pole might be elected king. Not uninfluenced by the British constitution, with its permanent parliament, they contemplated far-reaching reforms and guarded against the presence in diets of men sworn to vote according to written instructions. They increased the number of the tribunals, where decision by majority prevailed. They reorganized the financial administration by subordinating local treasurers to a central office. Thus they showed that the adherents of Russia were bent on making Poland respectable.

It soon appeared, however, that while the conception of a respectable but client Poland found some favour in St Petersburg, it was deemed entirely preposterous at Berlin. Prussia scouted the current notion that her treaty with Russia meant partition, but she would permit nothing that could give Poland strength. Catherine, concerned for her own future, but confident of her ability to manage Frederick, Poniatowski and the Poles, consented that the *liberum veto* should be sacrosanct, and secured her immediate reward. Other foreign powers contented themselves with stipulating that the election should be free and that there should be no dismemberment. The Polish malcontents were no match for the forces of the Con-

federation and of Russia. After a moment's civil war, Branicki, beaten at Słonim, fled to Hungary and Radziwiłł to the Turks, who had been cajoled into non-intervention. Stanislas Poniatowski, already decked like a king by Frederick with the Black Eagle, was unanimously elected (7 September 1764) and crowned, in foreign dress, on Catherine's name-day. The *pacta conventa* pledged him to marry only a Pole, to found a school of cadets and to accept the recent reforms. In December, the Diet prolonged the Confederation, and rewarded the Family with fresh advantages and honours.

Within eighteen months of the Russian revolution, Catherine had thus gone far towards realizing her ambition to become the arbiter of Europe. She had ended the Seven Years' War, driven Prince Charles from Courland, received the pressing overtures of Prussia and of Britain for alliance and given a king to Poland. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light", ran Frederick's memorable tribute to her success. But she had accepted as a partner in Poland a monarch whose interests were the direct negation of her own. She looked for docile co-operation from the contented Poles; he, for disturbances that might bring about partition. To this end, he vetoed almost every effort to reform or to enrich the Polish State. He scouted, and was able to prevent, change in the *liberum veto* and in taxation. He was soon able, while continuing his own intrigues at Constantinople, to reveal to Catherine Stanislas' negotiations with France and Austria, which might have ended in an Austrian marriage. His longest lever on St Petersburg, however, was the clause in the Prusso-Russian pact which pledged both monarchs to protect and to restore the Dissidents.

The wrongs of which the non-Romanist Christians in Poland complained were the outcome of the two centuries which had passed since the Council of Trent. During these the moral current had converted the most latitudinarian of nations into the most zealous. That instinct for national unity which was grotesquely frustrated by the Polish State seemed to seek appeasement in the Polish church. Whatever laws and treaties might declare, the Polish masses now believed, like other Europeans, that fellow-countrymen outside the national church were untrustworthy and even wicked, and that connivance at dissent imperilled their own salvation. By 1763, the many Greek churchmen of Russian blood in Lithuania and the few Protestants of mixed origin in western Poland were fortunate if they could worship undisturbed. To restore to them their ancestors' place in the government would be unthinkable.

Faced with such mass fanaticism, in Poland, as in other lands, a few of the Enlightened protested, or, more prudently, at least hid their contempt. To secure justice for the Polish Dissidents, the utmost delicacy was essential. The caution of Konarski, who waited many years before launching his attack upon the *liberum veto*, might well have been imitated by his disciples. Persecution should first have been discredited, and tolerance of private worship gradually re-established. The electoral franchise for Dissidents, and ultimately their eligibility for office, might have then become distant goals. The presence of Stanislas, a tolerant Catholic, upon the throne formed a visible pledge of royal ill-will towards persecution. But to demand that, at the behest of the schismatic Catherine and the heretic Frederick, the most fervent of Catholic nations should forthwith instal non-Catholics among its rulers, was either sabotage or madness. No Polish statesman would venture his life or his soul by sponsoring such a law, and the Dissidents themselves hung back.

Catherine, however, did not appreciate the danger. Her minister, the smooth diplomatist Panin, though probably proof against Frederick's bribes, was highly susceptible to Frederick's influence. Repnin, his violent nephew, adjunct and now successor of honest Kayserling at Warsaw, was all for ruthless coercion. The Favourite, Orlov, who usually stood aloof from politics, detested Stanislas, his predecessor. The Chernishevs, among whom Zachary ranked as a discarded lover, were for severity and Prussia.

Catherine herself had had small experience of Roman zealotry. To protect Russian-speaking subjects of the Republic in the exercise of Russian worship and of normal Polish privileges might well become her, and aided by Prussia and the Polish advocates of toleration, she must be invincible. When she identified her own imperial prestige with the restoration to the Dissidents of their parchment rights, however, she entangled herself in Poland to the height of Frederick's desire. Chaos there would make Prussian aid indispensable, and it might well be paid for with the coveted Polish lands. Panin, so Frederick held, had hinted the possibility of partition. This, it is true, was not worth a general war, but a general war might by skilful diplomacy be averted. Prussia, therefore, might without imprudence both oppose every attempt to strengthen the Polish crown or State, and insist upon justice to the Dissidents.

In 1765 Catherine, intent on leading European thought, was courting the French Philosophers, and meditating on her famous *Instruction* for a liberal code of laws. Frederick meanwhile demanded

that justice for the Dissidents should be hurried on, and himself took measures to defeat the Polish plans for a revenue worthy of the nation. By suddenly imposing a tax of ten per cent. upon the value of Polish-borne traffic on the lower Vistula he ultimately attained his object, and, by removing the tax in deference to her remonstrances, he immediately placed Catherine in his debt. He likewise made skilful use of Turkish aversion to change in Poland—a force which for a moment had jeopardized Stanislas' election. Catherine was thus made to feel that Polish reform was dangerous, and that she both needed and possessed a serviceable ally. She and her confidants expected that the next Diet would conform to her desires, but, failing such compliance, the lapse of time had made it more difficult for her to recede.

Meanwhile the tide of Polish indignation was rising, and the masses began to see national enemies in Muscovites and in Dissidents alike. In the spring of 1766, Catherine and Panin sought to pave the way towards peace in Poland by sending Caspar von Saldern on a special mission to the King. No envoy has ever been more variously appraised than this formidable German squire, whose fate it was to serve Russia at several courts with conspicuous zeal and no less conspicuous ill-fortune. "However deeply I must distrust an English minister", a French diplomatist declared, "I shall always think this Holsteiner *false* still." The shrewd English envoy at Warsaw would have concurred, while Frederick and the Danes found Saldern detestable. Yet many honest men believed him honest. Panin respected him and Catherine confided in his powers. A veteran of massive mould, he was outspoken, God-fearing, and one whose foremost claim was to be upright. At Warsaw, although on this occasion he "gained universal approval by his open and conciliatory manner of treating every different party", the Diet, which sat from 6 October to 29 November, failed to comply with Catherine's demands on behalf of the Dissidents. Frederick, meanwhile, had refused to give Saldern the smallest hope of widening the Prusso-Russian alliance by the admission of other northern powers. He welcomed the bold assertion that Russia had never contemplated the abandonment of the *liberum veto*, and declared that France and Austria were beggars who could not afford a war.

In partnership with such a king, Catherine could not pass over the recalcitrance of a Poland which her troops still occupied. When the Diet met, she had thought that the Dissidents might form twin Confederations, supported by the Russian garrison, while Frederick's



forces approached the Polish border. After its close, she could only congratulate herself that she and her ally had disproved the current rumours of partition, and that, without French and Austrian aid, the Poles must be too weak to deny the Dissidents their ancient rights. Less well-informed than the Prussian king, she had declined his prudent counsel to sacrifice the Dissidents, and thus to purchase Romanist support for her veto on constitutional reform. At her behest, therefore, a four-power move was made, and Britain and Denmark joined with Russia and Prussia in demanding justice for the oppressed non-Romanists. Following a Russian-inspired petition of their own, Repnin formally communicated to the King and Diet the demands of Catherine on their behalf. As the representative of the Empress he spoke seated, with hat upon his head, and used the Russian language. Although the Papal Nuncio urged the Diet to refuse compliance, the four-power move provoked no counterstroke by Catholic powers.

In the spring of 1767 the Polish question seemed rather a domestic Russian problem than, as in 1764, an affair of Europe. Such changes outside Russia as were visible seemed rather to favour Catherine's policy. Her ally was more vigorous and autocratic than his enemies in repairing the ravages of war, while Joseph II, the new Emperor, was the last man to countenance intolerance or a crusade. These changes, however, were but slight by comparison with that in Catherine's own position. For nearly five years she had now displayed her unique capacity to rule and to inspire, without risking her prestige by war or by such follies as an Orlov marriage or neglect of the ordinances of the Church. Neither Russia nor Poland had produced any man or woman who could say her nay, and in chastising Poles a Russian ruler could always count upon popular support.

Early in 1767 the proposed Confederations came into being, with a Lutheran and a Calvinist at their head. Perhaps at the Allies' instigation, Danzig, Toruń and Elbing were among the towns that joined them. In May, while Catherine, full of plans for a Russian parliament, was reviewing her Tartar subjects at Kazan, the Poles were flocking to subscribe to parallel Confederations of their own at Wilno and Radom, the pro-Saxons, no less than the Dissidents, being inspired by Russia. Radziwiłł, recalled from exile, became their leader.

The gentry, numbering some 80,000, who had thus confederated, soon found, however, that they had been deceived. Repnin's agents had led them to believe that the Empress was ready to dethrone Stanislas and to vindicate against the Family the ancient liberties of

the Republic. They found instead that she expected them to obey the King and to concede the Dissidents' demands. Compared with this, her guarantee of the territorial integrity of the Republic ranked as nothing. They replied by electing foes of Russia as their deputies to the Extraordinary Diet which met in the autumn. This assembly was stirred to its depths by speeches from the Papal Nuncio and from the Catholic extremists. Catherine's policy, it was clear, had no support save force. Force Repnin accordingly employed, deporting into Russia the bishop of Cracow and three other leaders for attacking the purity of the Empress' intentions. "The Republic", the British representative wrote home, "have no other arms to oppose than tears and supplications", and the King thought "with the utmost dejection of the irrecoverable dependence of this nation". The Diet, however, appointed a Delegation to negotiate with Repnin regarding the Dissidents and the other matters in dispute.

Negotiation with the man who declared that, if opposed, he would deport not four but forty Polish magnates proved but an euphemism for surrender to the will of Russia. The deportation of ecclesiastics left the Catholic courts unmoved, and the Pope vainly exhorted Austria to interfere. No change likely to strengthen the State, whether the establishment of a permanent council or the autonomy of the Polish church, could escape Frederick's veto, uttered by the lips of his ally. Early in 1768, the fatal year for Poland, "that enslaved Delegation" accepted all that Repnin enjoined. Polish progress since the death of the Saxon King was to be whittled down to the introduction of capital punishment for the noble who should slay a *roturier* or a peasant.

To stifle the fury of Warsaw, Repnin placed the town under a blockade. It was indeed becoming clear that only the permanent presence of Russian troops could maintain Stanislas upon the throne. The Delegation had been forced to approve the full claims of the Dissidents, although the concession of new chapels in places where foreign "manufacturers" dwelt was probably the maximum that public opinion could have accepted. Now, before the end of February 1768, the Diet was constrained to endorse the decisions of the Delegation, and to sanction a treaty with Russia by which the Empress guaranteed the status created by this surrender. Russia, it seemed, had dictated to the Poles how they should be governed, and had made Poland a protectorate.

To appreciate all that followed, the full significance of the Russian coercion must be made clear. The Poles, however reluctantly, had

by no means denied the Dissidents a legal status. The demands made by Reprnin with the utmost solemnity in the autumn of 1766 had been referred, at his own desire, to the Polish bishops. These had approved the continuance of the privileges which the Dissidents still retained, together with certain modest enlargements. Their affairs, for example, were to be removed from the jurisdiction of the Catholic church, and their clergy set free from dues payable upon appointment. Catholic nationalism, in a word, consented to check its flowing tide, and the ebb, driven by the storm-wind from Russia, might have gone far, had not the Protestant extremists intervened.

Now, however, the Poles were bound by treaty to proclaim immediately freedom of belief, of worship and of instruction, to concede to the Dissidents the right to build new temples, and to give them access to the diet, the Senate, the bench and the public service. Furthermore, for suits between Catholics and Dissidents, mixed courts were to be established. These provisions, several of which would have seemed intolerable in England, were declared in Poland to be fundamental laws.

Fundamental and intangible likewise were the elective character of the monarchy, the *liberum veto*, and the privileges of the gentry with regard to land and labour. The strict *liberum veto* must apply to votes touching such high functions of the State as taxation, the army, making of treaties and of war, and the creation of ministers, assemblies and tribunals. At one stroke, the Republic underwent a Tory revolution. The submission of the King and of the Family was rewarded, apart from material benefits, with a small curtailment of the sphere in which the *liberum veto* must prevail, while some economic questions might be decided by a majority vote.

Early in 1768, then, Catherine, with Frederick in the background and Stanislas as her puppet, seemed to be irresistible. Radziwiłł and her other tools received promotion, but still no forceful protest was received. A single Polish deputy who opposed had been compelled to flee. At the very moment of Poland's seeming self-abasement, however, her sons by hundreds were taking up arms against the foreign tyrant. Inspired by the bishop of Kamieniec, the universally esteemed Krasinśki, the Confederation of Bar, in remote Podolia, struck for the liberty and faith of Poland. While Krasinśki sought help from Austria, Saxony and France, the patriot Joseph Pułaski, despite his four-and-sixty years, formed an armed force in their defence, and the Knights of the Holy Cross swore to defend religion to the last extremity. At Warsaw, St Petersburg and Berlin, the significance of

the new confederation was not at first perceived. Though unfortunately led, and misled, by the partisans of Saxony, the rank and file were Polish patriots and heroes of the Polish nation, which sees in their rising the revival of the Polish spirit. In 1768, however, Repnin could sneer at "banditti", whose numbers, late in March, were thought not to exceed two thousand. Soon, however, at the unconstitutional request of the Polish Senate, Russian troops who were marching home were sent against them, while the Turks, stirred up by France, demanded that Catherine should evacuate Poland without delay.

During April 1768, the check to Repnin's recent triumph was made clear. The confederates were trebly strong in that bodies like that of Bar were springing up elsewhere, while Polish troops which confronted them might join the rebel ranks, and Russian coercion would probably excite the neighbouring Turks to intervene. Before the month was over, the revolt threatened to become national, and the British representative at Warsaw predicted that the outcome would be war.

Throughout the summer, news of Russian victories alternated with news of fresh confederations. The ruin caused by civil strife was multiplied tenfold when the Greeks of the Ukraine ruthlessly murdered the Roman priests and gentry and burned and pillaged their estates. On the domains of the Potocki twenty thousand fugitives were put to death. Although the Russian regulars proved invincible, and Pułaski fled from Poland, the spirit of revolt was too widespread to be extinguished. At Constantinople, moreover, the influence of France prevailed against that of Britain, while Catherine's pride forbade her to retrace her steps in Poland. The Russians could only cling to the hope that the autumn Diet would in some way restore peace by agreement. In the autumn, however, it became clear that the Turks meant mischief. Instead of quitting Poland, Catherine's troops, chastizing the Ukrainian murderers, had burned a Turkish town. The Russian minister at Constantinople was flung into prison, and in October war broke out.

In a moment Catherine's whole situation was transformed. For a full year, she had seemed to combine the glory of liberalizing Russia with the glory of liberalizing Poland. Deputies from her own provinces had debated, sometimes in her presence, the betterment of Russia on the principles of her *Instruction*. Meanwhile she believed herself to have made Poland national in its constitution, equitable towards religion, and safe under her guarantee. Hot-heads, indeed,

had taken up arms, but in August 1768, when the Russians reconquered Cracow, no considerable body of these Confederates remained afoot. Wise, bold and fortunate, the Empress might well seem irresistible.

A Turkish invasion, indeed, must be remote, for between the two empires an immense desert intervened. The Tartars might ravage the border, but the outcome might well be their own conquest by Russia. War, none the less, must render Catherine more dependent upon her people; and Russia, upon the favour of other States. Sweden, for instance, might now be drawn towards Choiseul, and Austria, away from Stanislas. Any recourse to naval warfare must change Britain from a remote suitor of Catherine to a dictator close at hand. Above all, the Poles had at last found their longed-for protector. With Catherine's eyes turned south instead of west, the Confederates would multiply and the Russian garrison diminish. A Turkish victory in the first campaign would bring half Poland into the saddle, and, if the first campaign were not the last, the manifold strain upon Russia must loosen her grip on the Republic.

Nowhere did these considerations, and their natural or likely consequences, find more clear-eyed scrutiny than at Potsdam. While he still shunned embroilment in a war, Frederick could only welcome an opportunity to profit by his troops and diplomats, and to practise his wide-ranging statecraft without danger. He saw how Catherine hastened to replace the over-bearing Repnin by the courteous, elderly Volkonski, how the Diet proved a shadow, and how Poland moved towards anarchy, while in Russia every nerve was strained to provide for the unwelcome war. He saw, most ominous of all, that no one could suggest a feasible plan for reconciling Russia with the Polish nation. The estrangement had gone so far that Catherine's old hopes of docile dependence seemed fantastic. While the Russian plan fell short of 200,000 men, the Confederates, it was said, had engaged to aid the Turks with 100,000, and to partition Russian provinces with their allies.

To such designs of alliance and of partition Frederick replied in kind. Early in 1769, he proposed that the Prusso-Russian alliance should be extended to 1780, and Catherine could not refuse. The fact that Prussia had openly abjured partition, and that Catherine had repeatedly guaranteed the integrity of the Republic, prevented the direct disclosure of Frederick's dearest wishes, the more so as a far-reaching offensive against the Turks was being planned. Early in February, none the less, he sent to St Petersburg a *ballon d'essai*,

fathered upon Count Lynar, for a dismemberment of Poland in favour of Russia, Austria and Prussia. Six weeks later, Panin replied that Russia already had land enough, but that if the two German powers would sink their differences, and help to expel the Turks from Europe, she would not resent the union of Frederick's central and eastern provinces. In so far as it is possible to build upon so flimsy a foundation, the Russian answer may indicate that if a vast aggrandisement were gained with her neighbours' aid, she would permit the ally who could not find compensation in Turkey to find it in Poland. Poland, none the less, might receive a Turkish equivalent for what she lost, and might remain a protectorate of victorious and aggrandized Russia. Compulsory exchange of provinces was not partition.

At the same time the enforced prudence which had dictated the appointment of a mulder representative in Warsaw and a compliant tone towards Prussia caused Russia to show no resentment of the defensive occupation by Austria of trading towns in Zips (April 1769). This province, though severed from the Hungarian crown, was almost enclaved in her dominions.

With the spring, the war at last began in earnest, for Tartar forays in January produced only misery and exasperation. The Russians, inspired by Catherine, whose autocracy was qualified by a council of nine, had framed gigantic plans for a five-fold offensive by land and sea. Distance, however, proved their most formidable opponent. Immense marches through sparsely-peopled provinces lowered the strength of the armies far more than battle. Throughout the summer, Golitsyn manœuvred near the Dniester, in a vain attempt to capture Chocim, while in Poland the notion of Russian omnipotence could not but fade. At St Petersburg, likewise, the memory of Poland as anything other than a costly burden grew ever more remote. After the first catastrophe in June 1768, new risings in Cracow and in Lithuania had taken place, and the rebellion was now widespread. While the rebels watched for a Turkish triumph, Frederick endeavoured to turn a new page in history by meeting the young Emperor in Silesia. The rivals took each other's measure, and opened intercourse, but arrived at no common plan. In Austria, indeed, Joseph's authority as yet was small, and his ambitions were not turned towards Poland or the east. France also failed to purchase an attack by Sweden on the power which had robbed her of Livonia.

In September, however, Golitsyn gained an almost accidental triumph on the Dniester. Chocim fell and with it the dearest hopes of the Confederates. Golitsyn's more vigorous successor, Rumiantsev,

was free to direct an attack on Jassy, and, although Bender remained untaken, on Ismail and the lower Danube. To be thus flanked by the Russians, and perhaps cut off from the Black Sea, was a prospect which must disturb the Austrians, and henceforward Catherine had to reckon with an increased Austrian interest in Poland. During October, Jassy fell, and northern Moldavia swore allegiance to the Empress. In Poland, meanwhile, "pro-Russian" and "traitor" had become synonymous, and the Senate recommended steps, such as the despatch of a special envoy to London, which must still further alienate the "protector". The sole path to reconciliation, the peace-makers felt, was renunciation by Catherine of the Russo-Polish treaty, and this she would never take. That the Catholic powers should give a guarantee to Poland was a plan that she regarded as an insult. In the campaign of 1770 the Russians must sweep all such ideas away. The first campaign had at least brought them to the Danube. The next must see them triumphant from Greece to the Caucasus and perhaps at Constantinople. Having thus crushed the sole protectors of the Poles, Catherine could reassert her authority at Warsaw, and commend it by her magnanimity and wisdom.

Though victory in 1770 came somewhat slowly, it came in rich variety and with brilliance beyond compare. While Britain warded off France and Spain, and gave no little technical assistance, the Russian squadrons made their way from the Baltic to the eastern Mediterranean. Having roused the Greeks to ill-fated revolt against the Turks, at midsummer they crushed the Turkish fleet at Tchesmé—a defeat as resounding as that of Lepanto (1571). A fortnight later, after strategy dictated by the image of the Empress though not by her pen, her army put the Crimean Tartars to headlong flight, and after another fortnight, the Grand Vizier himself fled in panic across the Danube. Several Danube fortresses fell: the road to the Turkish capital lay almost open: the fall of Bender threatened the conquest of the Crimea; Orlov devised a plan for capturing Constantinople. Not an iota, said the Russians, in their Polish treaty should be changed.

In fact, the Russian victories of 1770 spelt the failure of Catherine's policy in Poland. Unbiased contemporaries perceived that dependence on Russia, the *liberum veto*, and Dissident equality could never satisfy the Poles. The campaign had been rich in victories, but it was far from assuring victory in a religious war. The Turks had lost no more than territorial outworks of their stronghold in Europe, which itself rested on their solid Asiatic power. Though Turkish leadership

had proved contemptible, the Russians owed much to chance, and every league of advance beyond the Danube would be to their disadvantage. Russia had no teeming population, and her peasant conscripts were drilled but slowly into fighting men. Their habits made dysentery a deadly foe, and a deadlier, the bubonic plague, had now begun to threaten. It was easy to see that in 1771 they might not be strong enough to conquer.

Conquest, moreover, called for treasure, and observers doubted whether Russia could finance a long-drawn war. Catherine, indeed, excelled in assuming an air of plenty, while no one knew all the secrets of her budget. Speaking broadly, however, if Russia remained at war the cost, in money as in men, must fall upon the peasants. The Empress had no considerable credit or scope for fresh taxation. She was too wise to leave her servants long unpaid. The peasant discontent, which in 1773 caused dangerous revolt, was not yet obvious. But Catherine knew that the nobles also derived their incomes from peasant dues, in cash, in labour or in kind. To draw recruits and taxes from the peasants must tend to impoverish men whom, with Paul now sixteen years of age, Catherine dared not offend.

On the morrow of victory, therefore, Russia found herself threatened by plague and poverty, by general discontent and by interminable wars. All this was utilized against her by the most untiring of her foes, her ally Frederick. His desire that Russia should not become too strong stood second only to his desire that she should never again fight Prussia. A general war must at all costs be avoided. France, it was suspected, "blew up the coals" in every quarter, but a second interview with Joseph, whom Kaunitz accompanied to Moravia, convinced Frederick that the Austrians were no tools of France. Russian aggrandisement, therefore, must be more deadly to Austria than to Prussia, for it threatened her neighbour Turkey as well as Poland. Diplomatic collaboration with Austria to check Russia would at least postpone a fourth Silesian war without jeopardizing European peace. While the statesmen debated, they received an invitation from the Turks to mediate. With deep satisfaction, Frederick sent Catherine the unwelcome news of their acceptance, ascribing this to the hope of checking France.

Russia, of course, declined, but late in October, when the Austrians had annexed Zips, Frederick again trod a path which led away from Russian control of Poland. To reduce the Confederates to reason, he urged, the three powers should jointly intervene. It had become clear that the Dissidents comprised a mere handful of men of any



standing; that to the Polish nation as a whole Russia was the enemy; and that unaided she could do little more than sequester estates, including those of the Czartoryski, and maintain a garrison in Warsaw. Meanwhile Frederick's brother Henry, Catherine's old playfellow, was on his way to St Petersburg.

Although a mere extension of a trip to his sister's court in Sweden, Prince Henry's visit to the Russian capital forms a landmark in the history of Poland. Prolonged until January 1771, it witnessed such important events as the downfall of Choiseul, and the success of the Confederates, led by Pułaski and heartened by Dumouriez, in holding the sacred town of Częstochowa against the Russians. The Prussian prince, most royally entertained by Catherine from mid-October, personified his brother's plan of ending the Turkish war at the expense of Poland. Warsaw, not for the first time, expected a partition. Meanwhile the two allies demanded that the Polish king should join a new Confederation formed by the friends of Russia to negotiate alike with the Dissidents and with the men of Bar. The obnoxious Russian guarantee would be replaced by that of Russia and of Prussia, with liberty to the Poles to invite Catholic Austria to make a third. The "sanitary cordons" of all three powers were extended.

At St Petersburg, an important party favoured collaboration with Frederick, and on 8 January 1771, the Empress publicly indicated that her intransigence was at an end. In the previous month she had raised no objection when Prussia emended a form of guarantee by omitting the word "possessions". Now, at an evening party, she smilingly asked Prince Henry why Prussia should not imitate the conduct of Austria in seizing portions of Poland. Count Chernishev followed by suggesting Warmia, the bishopric which was almost enclaved in Frederick's dominions. The Prussian minister, Count Solms, the last man to speak without instructions, named Polish Livonia and "the frontier of the rivers" as the Russian share. This pointed to a Russo-Polish boundary in which the Dvina and the Dnieper should be connected by a line running between Mohilev and Mińsk. Although such conversational exchanges fell far short of a binding offer, they formed at least an invitation to negotiate, and independent overtures to Prince Henry by Russian statesmen followed. Frederick promptly poured contempt on Warmia, but, while advancing the "sanitary cordon" of his troops in Poland, he refused to give Austria a pledge of neutrality in a future Austro-Russian war.

Prince Henry returned to Potsdam full of pride in his success. Frederick at first showed coolness, perhaps because his confidential correspondence with the Empress had been chiefly concerned with what she might exact from Turkey. The twentieth of February 1771 marks the transition to an eager expectation of the help of Russia in partition. Now, Solms is informed, his master rejects the overtures of Austria for evacuating her most recent seizures. "Some small province in Poland", Frederick declares, "as ointment for my burns—that you must provide." Russia, he argued, would not mind whence her compensation came, and he would strive to procure her a glorious peace. After all, it was Poland that had caused the war. But, in pacifying Poland, Russia should not forget "my little profits". "Try your hardest", he urged, "to get me something", and he promised a proportionate reward. When the Confederates attacked Russia, they had annulled her territorial guarantee of Poland. Let Solms arrange the date, and Frederick would promptly seize the Prussian share. Such was the burden of the great king's instructions down to the end of March. Their tenour points rather to high hope than to assurance.

Catherine indeed implied and meant no more than that, if Russia were duly satisfied, Frederick might expect a Polish province. Her zeal for peace in Poland and with the Turks rivalled his for the avoidance of a general war. Both watched while Austria, on whose decision their hopes depended, negotiated on every side and armed. Frederick, arming in his turn, intrigued for Austrian appropriation of Polish soil, but Austria, while tempted by the great salt-mines near Cracow, preferred all other lands to those of Poland and all other possible allies to Prussia.

Catherine, meanwhile, though cheered by the submission of the Budziak Tartars and by the Turkish release of her imprisoned minister, felt that the foreign and the domestic situation alike were altering to her disadvantage. The Austrian menace grew: the Confederates, helped by France, became more aggressive: a new mission to Poland by Von Saldern failed: the rise of Struensee in Denmark was interpreted as the capture of the Danes by France: in Sweden the advent of Gustavus III in February portended danger. Britain's refusal to bribe the Swedish opposition may have cost her the Russian alliance.

At home, war weariness must grow with time. The main campaign upon the Danube yielded no triumphs like those of 1770, and, with Austria hostile, the march to Constantinople could not begin. The illness of Paul, whom Panin nursed by day and night, increased the

people's disaffection. Catherine, the rumour ran, having murdered two Emperors, had now poisoned a third potential rival, a virtual prisoner. Under-officers of the Guard plotted to depose her and to crown her son. Although, as the summer advanced, Paul recovered, no fresh opponent took the field, and Russia conquered the Crimea, the main object of peace in Poland and with the Turk was plainly unattainable in 1771.

Austria, in the meantime, had taken a secret decision which must gravely endanger peace. Instead of proceeding on the road marked out by Prussia, she promised evacuation of Poland, and sold her protection to the Turks. She designed at once to deprive Frederick of his pretext for partition, to save Turkey from the Russians, and to gain both acres and allies. Early in July, the Turks contemplated the cession of the Bukovina and a great indemnity; Austria, the restoration of their empire and of Polish independence. Although the sight of silver-laden carts on the road to Hungary gave the British minister at Constantinople an inkling of the truth, the text of the Austro-Turkish treaty reached Catherine only in the following year.

Till the autumn, however, the ambiguous behaviour of Austria weighed heavily on both the allies. For a time Frederick seemed almost to lose sight of the coveted provinces in his ardour to avert a wider war. By Michaelmas, however, he perceived that Austria could not take the field. Her harvest failed, and the activists argued in vain with their pacific queen. On 8 October, he predicted that she would end by accepting that partition which again became his chief objective. To attain it, he urged Russia to array the maximum of force in Poland and to seize as many provinces as she desired. This, he calculated, would both reduce her demands on Turkey, which were obnoxious alike to the German and the Bourbon powers, and would increase the Prussian right to compensation. At the end of October, without abandoning the borderlands which he had specified in the spring, he was claiming Danzig, for the Russians a "mere trifle", which he declared, cut up all his possessions. For a month at least he had regarded Catherine as his accomplice.

That in the summer Catherine had consented to partition Poland may be ascribed to her perception that without such consent her aims were unattainable and her throne in peril. Saldern, though he styled Frederick a robber, had reported the Poles incorrigible. His overbearing methods had proved futile, and the Grand General of Lithuania, Ogiński, had joined the Confederates. The Poles, indeed, were now almost unanimous against the Empress. Turkish provinces,

moreover, might be conquered, but could they be retained? Austria steadily refused consent, and Prussia would risk nothing to aggrandize Catherine in Turkey. With her own nobles weary of the war and the people threatened by the plague, she could not alienate her only possible ally. Already she had called on him to garrison Poznań and to supply munitions to her troops. A secret Russo-Prussian convention for partition, without regard for Austria, and for mutual defence against her, had been drawn up.

Within a few weeks, two startling events attested Catherine's prudence in accepting Frederick's demands. The people of Moscow, maddened by their Archbishop's intervention to guard them against the plague, slew him in his cathedral. In November, all Europe was shocked by the news that in Warsaw Stanislas had been kidnapped by confederates and had barely escaped alive. This unprecedented crime, the fruit of Pułaski's hopes for enforcing abdication, gave rise to various reactions. Frederick argued that it entitled Russia to claim his help, while Maria Theresa offered to receive a Polish envoy. Catherine, far more resentful of the Moscow outrage, could not fail to see that the patience of the people had its limits, and to strive anew for peace. Frederick's demand for Danzig, none the less, though seconded by Saldern, now furious with the Poles and bribed by Prussia, met with a courteous but steadfast refusal. To cede that great emporium was not only to aggrandize Prussia and to cripple Poland but also to alienate Britain, whose subjects conducted thence much of the northern trade. Keeping, as usual, her hands free to the last, Catherine declared that she regarded all as settled, but she deferred a formal covenant. The year ended with misery widespread in Poland, where the Prussians tyrannized over the parts within their lines. Again, as in the Seven Years' War, they flooded the country with base currency, and captured inhabitants and property alike.

Before the next unwelcome campaign could begin, the fate of Poland had been signed and sealed. On 17 February, in Catherine's capital, Russians and Prussians set their hands to a definite compact for partition. Before the actual signature they knew that Austria would co-operate. The news that she would thus break her Turkish treaty, indeed, followed hard on the belated news that she had made it. This revolution represented a victory of the "realistic" statesmen, Kaunitz and Joseph II, over the Christian idealism of the Queen. It went far to justify Frederick's gibe, "She is always weeping and always taking", and it constituted a deliberate breach of public law by a composite State which stood peculiarly in need of respect for

legal title. Catherine rightly gave Frederick the doubtful glory, and looked forward to a lasting triple union. The King replied that she, by sending troops to Poland, had brought Austria round, and in nineteen days warned her four times against Vienna.

Meanwhile, the compacts were kept secret, and the three powers bargained strenuously regarding their several shares. So solemn had been the Russian guarantees of Poland, and so contrary to Russian interests seemed dismemberment, that the outside world was slow to realize the truth. Before the end of May, indeed, the Warsaw public and the British Foreign Office guessed it, but, a full month later, many still disbelieved. The Confederates, led by a French officer, had surprised the castle of Cracow, and it cost the rising hero, Suvorov, much pains to win it back. Their leaders, of course, were now expelled from Austria, but Częstochowa held out until August 1772. Its capture by Bibikov, following Suvorov's victory over Ogiński in the previous September, ended the Polish war.

On 5 August, with the signature of three separate treaties, partition was formally decided. Frederick had won his race against time, for Russia had not yet come to terms with Turkey and Poland was still disturbed. Thus handicapped, Catherine was the readier to make concessions, while his distrust of Austria forced Frederick to be liberal towards Vienna. Poland, already pillaged from end to end and robbed of men by the hundred thousand, was doomed to cede more than a fourth part of her area and some four millions of her population. Russia, in Polish Livonia and White Russia as far as "the rivers", received the largest area, much of it in lands anciently her own and peopled by men of her own religion. This surpassed the Austrian share, manœuvred by Frederick southwards, only by less than one-eighth in extent. Prussia received little more than one-sixth of the whole, but, by every political test, her gain was of all the greatest.

The treaties of partition, which began, in Austrian fashion, with the invocation of the Trinity, were followed by documents declaring the rights of the three powers to the lands designated for their annexation. Commissioners were sent to Warsaw, Stackelberg replacing Saldern, and Benoît retaining his post, while the Austrians chose Rewitzky. Having formally lodged their claims, they proceeded to swear in the inhabitants, of whom many rejoiced to escape from anarchy to firm government. Stanislas, declaring that he had lost two-thirds of his revenue, and that duty bade him suffer bravely as a faithful servant

of the State, appealed for rescue to almost every independent power. Europe, however, viewed the crime in sullen impotence. Even Voltaire, who hated the persecuting Poles and sincerely wished Catherine well, had congratulated her on destroying anarchy in Poland "by giving each what he believes is his, beginning with herself". Britain, without the will or power to interfere, replied to the formal notification by the three powers with an expression of her King's hope that they believed in the justice of their claims. Grotesquely enough, it was Austria, the assailant least hostile to Poland, that harmed her most. The ally of France, she paralysed French intervention, which, none the less, inevitably alienated Britain. The rival of Prussia, but now abjuring war, she betrayed both Poles and Turks for an aggrandizement which, to atone for her infamy, must be great, and which became ever greater as Prussia grasped more and more. Both German powers, indeed, widened their claims after the treaty, as during its negotiation. While Prussia placed a fantastic construction on the grant to her of "all the river Noteć (Netze)", and thereby added more than three hundred places to her share, Austria declared that a misnamed boundary river was not the Sereth, as intended, but the Zbrucz, thus making a spacious gain.

Since outside help and popular resistance were hopeless, the Poles could look only to delay caused by their own constitution and to a quarrel between the thieves. The failure to accomplish peace with Turkey, however, made Catherine pliable, and Frederick was determined to avert a war. If the triple league survived, it was useless for the Polish Senate to support the King in refusing to summon a Diet, thus preventing the legal acceptance of partition by its victim. The invading hosts only continued to devour the country, while Russia could always bring Stanislas to reason by cutting off his supplies and threatening deposition or a still more drastic partition. Catherine at least rescued Danzig from Frederick's clutches, and still aspired to rule by influence in Poland. Stanislas, whose pliant policy had saved something from the wreck in 1768, strove in vain for a better constitution. The recovery of Poland, it was clear, must await her own regeneration.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE AGE OF STANISLAS AUGUSTUS AND THE NATIONAL REVIVAL

#### I. FROM THE ELECTION OF STANISLAS AUGUSTUS TO THE FIRST PARTITION, 1764-1772

THE reign of Stanislas Augustus was the epoch both of political regeneration and of the greatest calamity in modern history. After the annihilation of the State there was to follow a long period of ruthless persecution aimed at the extermination of the Polish nation and almost the extinction of the Polish name. This tragic paradox is explained by the awakening of healthy life in the nation, striving for regeneration and for independence, as well as by the situation of Europe. The history of Poland remained in close connection with that of Europe; it was dependent on the currents and commotions of which Eastern and Western Europe were the scene.

At this turning-point there appeared a great mind, a great heart, a great restorer of the political thought of the nation, an ardent lover of his country, a sober and independent observer of her life, Stanislas Konarski. He clearly saw the contradiction between the imposed foreign guarantee and the nation's independent life: "This they want and this they try to achieve, that we be free at home and in our external relations dependent on them." Konarski saw through the great plot which loomed ominously over the life of the Polish nation. A creative spirit, critical of the Polish constitution, he turned away from the sad present, looking forward to a better future. He did not lose faith in the nation: "We have a people which is...always quite apt to the good, but the form of debates introduced in it by misfortune is too bad and in everything pernicious to the country." "Have we grown as hard as stone?" This question, which was a challenge and an exhortation, he answered by arguing that Polish political thought had not grown lifeless like stone, that out of grief and care for the country condemnation of erroneous principles and ignoble practices was arising. The noble-minded Piarist recognized the mistakes, for he had seen the interregnum of 1733. He was painfully conscious that "the protection of the neighbours may be a stepmother to our liberty, but it cannot be its mother". During the first entanglements and commotions under Stanislas Augustus, he lamented the fate of "the

honoured prisoners violently torn from the very midst of our elective assembly" and "so many other innocent victims who had suffered for faith and freedom". Thus he deplored the victims of the Russian satrap Repnin—the Bishops Sołtyk and Załuski, Wenceslas and Seweryn Rzewuski. He lived to see the terrible moment which began the tragedy of the Commonwealth, "the setting-up of two cordons, a Prussian and an Austrian, under the pretext of the plague". He appealed to foreign, particularly French, assistance, confident that Polish liberty and independence were truly in the interest of Europe. The interference of Petersburg and Berlin was to him a proof that "we govern ourselves badly, that our weakness often gives occasion for disturbances in Europe". He saw that Russia and Prussia "confound everything, destroy everything, oppose everything. . . they themselves kindle among us the fire of discords and put the whole blame on us". Konarski placed himself at the head of the great national reformers; with his fervid heart and clear mind he grasped the needs of the nation and touched the wounds of political life, wishing to burn them out with hot iron. This was the criticism of a truly great patriot. Animated by love, he did not hesitate to tell the whole truth: "I honestly declare that I did not write fiction or expose the nation to shame, for a thousand worse things the French write of France and the English of England, not for the sake of insult, but for the sake of improvement. And this is worthy of honourable patriots." The honest patriot gained the confidence of the King, who struck a medal in his honour with the inscription "*sapere auso*". Konarski's work *On the efficacious manner of conducting debates* profoundly influenced the mental change which was setting in even before the first Partition.

At the close of Poniatowski's reign Konarski was followed by Kołłątaj, who still more insisted on the necessity of reform. On this road, encumbered with deep-rooted prejudices, the nation had to conquer itself and at the same time break internal obstacles laid by foreign violence. To correct the faults of the whole past exceeded the strength of one generation. That epoch presents the twofold picture of national regeneration and of the fall of the Commonwealth. Its character was reflected in Stanislas Augustus, a king with two faces, one turned towards the dawn of spiritual and national revival, the other towards the tragedy of the nation and of the King himself, towards the abasement of royal and human dignity. There were serene moments awakening confidence in a better future, particularly when the Constitution of 3 May was being passed, but suddenly the horizon darkened; the King and nation wavered, abandoning under



foreign violence the programme of national regeneration. Stanislas Augustus was representative of that epoch.

King Stanislas Augustus was the son of Stanislas Poniatowski, Castellan of Cracow and Grand Hetman of the Crown, a great soldier and statesman, and of Princess Constantia Czartoryska, sister of Augustus, Voivode of Ruthenia, and of Michael, Chancellor of Lithuania, the two most active and important men of their times. The King came into the world when the ambitious Augustus II, who had almost ruined Poland, was approaching his end. After him the true-born Polish candidate, Stanislas Leszczyński, was the candidate of the nation, but foreign will prevailed, and Augustus III reduced Poland to paralysis. Then the Polish-born candidate, Poniatowski, was elected not for valour and military genius, like King John Sobieski, but owing to the favour of Catherine II, which he was able to gain during his stay at the Russian court, a stay which was marked by a notorious love-affair and not by political action. This fact weighed heavily upon his whole life and reign. The King was continually burdened with distrust and never entirely freed himself from the fascination of the memories of his youthful adventure. In Stanislas Augustus' policy there acted, besides reasonable motives, unconsciously quite personal inducements which eventually led him to St. Petersburg. In his struggle against foreign predominance he was at the same time obliged to court his own nation, whose approval he rarely enjoyed.

A contemporary satirist, Bishop Krasicki, wrote: "The commonalty only holds in high esteem a lord of royal blood." And the proud magnates, even his own uncles, the Czartoryskis, threw into his face the calumny that he was a "steward's" son. The Polish republicans, indeed, professed equality among the whole gentry, but were extremely sensitive as to the origin of their Kings. They had arranged that Anne the Jagellonian should become the consort of two elected Kings. In the Vasa dynasty they honoured Jagellonian blood, and consented that Ladislas IV should succeed his father Sigismund III, and should be followed by his brother John Casimir. When the latter abdicated, the dynastic tradition of the Jagellons was finally broken. After the national king, Sobieski, Augustus II was foreign in language and spirit, but in spite of all calamities, in spite of his arrogance and of the weakness of Augustus III, the Saxon dynasty left memories which at the close of this period suggested the Saxon as the hereditary Polish dynasty. There was a glaring contradiction in the actions of the "Polish lords". They rose against their own kings, but in spite of

everything they respected kingship and considered "lordly blood" to be an "honour in the eyes of the commonalty", as was pointed out by the true Pole, Krasicki.

Poniatowski lacked the "honour" of royal descent, but had received a royal breeding as though he were destined for the crown from his birth. The education not so much of his heart as of his mind was supervised by his father and mother. He received a most careful training. His proud mother was anxious that her son should surpass his coevals in social and intellectual culture. He did not associate with young people, and had no real youth or enjoyment of life such as only freedom can give. He soon became acquainted with public life in a good, but hard, school, in the house of Prince Michael Czartoryski, in which the life of the Commonwealth was pulsating. Several times elected deputy to the Diet, he encountered the tempestuous Polish parliamentary life, and gained an experience which was very helpful when he ascended the throne. A sovereign most active in the debates of the Diet, he dominated the environment from which he came by his excellent eloquence and presence of mind. In the decisive moments of the Great Diet, the Speaker of the House, helpless himself, frequently appealed to the King, who played an important part in the preparation of the constitutional projects realized in the Government Bill of 3 May. He took a lively interest in the political condition of the countries he visited and showed appreciation of art and learning. In Paris he frequented the famous *salon* of Madame Geoffrin, where he came to know the great celebrities of the age of enlightenment, particularly the author of *L'Esprit des Lois*, and he did not content himself with becoming familiar with the external forms of life only, but strove to penetrate into the spirit of contemporary life. He became acquainted with England in her best aspects, he witnessed the sessions of the House of Lords, and went to the theatre to see performances of Shakespeare's plays. For the English genius he had understanding and even admiration. He devoted much study to the great English dramatist, and had a good knowledge of the English language. To the end of his life he was very anxious to possess the good opinion of the English world. Even when deprived of the crown, humiliated and stripped of the dignity of royal majesty, he assured the last British envoy to Warsaw that he was a friend of the King and people of England, and this avowal was sincere. The English Constitution seemed to him the best of all, and it was on it that he wanted to model his rule over his country.

Stanislas Augustus was undoubtedly the most enlightened and most universally educated Pole of his generation. As king he felt the need of spreading light and of creating a court which would radiate over the whole world. He had a liberal hand though his means were modest. He gathered round him many men of art and letters. He supported all kinds of creative activity and had a lordly, royal way with him. Through all his life he collected works of art, formed a rich gallery and a splendid library, built many edifices, and had a sense of his own original style. His achievements for culture survived the catastrophe of the State and the calamity of the King, who passed away in St. Petersburg, where the elusive and treacherous star had appeared on the horizon of his life. Unfortunately the corruption of the age had contaminated his soul, and deprived him of strength of character and firmness of convictions. Surrounded with foreigners of diverse origin and calibre, he cared more for mental stimuli than for their moral value. In moments of dejection, oppressed by the satraps of Russia, he too frequently submitted, forgetting the dignity of the Polish King and nation. Afterwards he would achieve a royal attitude, but too often he broke down physically and psychically. Though winning and dignified, if not knightly, he was soft, weak and over-refined, in contrast with his hard and stubborn father. Rather than this effeminate frequenter of *salons* a man of action with a soldier's courage was necessary at that period. Though he set up in his chambers the bust of Henri IV, he was no match for the great Bourbon, but rather resembled Louis XVI, wavering, weak, and able only to suffer with resignation. At the last, Stanislas Augustus left the historical stage without dignity. None the less, the mental transformation effected in the last period of the Commonwealth was mainly due to him. In the last days of his life his thoughts turned towards Poland, towards the Łazienki Palace which was his creation and his glory. The last epoch in the history of the Polish Commonwealth was called after its last King. It was a period of the fall of the State and the regeneration of the nation, for in that period, in spite of all weaknesses, the life of the nation was awakening, which was the pledge of a new future in the midst of calamities and storms.

Immediately after his election Stanislas Augustus began a busy life in contrast to the idle Augustus III. Eye-witnesses found that he wished to be his own minister, that he would personally take part in the daily deliberations and that he would work till late at night, disposing of his vast correspondence. He was indeed most industrious; the objection was even raised against him that he was entering too

much into detail. He knew well the necessities of the country, and his programme was connected with the reform of the Czartoryskis, partly carried at the Convocational Diet. The restriction of the *liberum veto*, though effected partially and gradually, was an urgent necessity in order to remove the most glaring and injurious faults of the rule of unanimity in passing bills in the Diet. Soon personal and political, as well as fundamental and practical, differences made themselves felt between the King and the Czartoryskis, who supported their nephew as their pupil and yet entertained a secret dislike and distrust which was chiefly aimed at the brothers whom he called to the council. The sensitive Czartoryskis did not want to assume responsibility for his unpopularity. The imposition of its will by Russia, backed by Prussia, in the delicate question of equality in rights of the dissidents—a matter of conscience—aggravated the situation. The Commonwealth made a considerable step towards satisfying the two neighbouring monarchies, recognizing the titles of the Empress of Russia and of the King of Prussia, and in return was exposed to the hard execution of the guarantees and to continuous vehement interference. The Russian troops did not leave Poland, and the Russian ambassador, Repnin, behaved like a "Roman proconsul in the period of the subjugation of a province after the Punic wars". Playing a bold and cunning political game, he threw his cards in an arbitrary and capricious way, and in this game there was logic which inflicted violence on reality. He wished at once to frustrate all reforms, to paralyse the King as a reformer, to prohibit all constitutional change and at the same time to grant rights to the dissidents. Prince Michael Radziwiłł, an outlaw who had unsuccessfully fought against the King's election, was recalled by Repnin and placed at the head of the confederacy at Radom to force those who dreamed of dethronement to recognize Stanislas Augustus. At the same time he demanded and wanted to extort by force the recognition of tolerance for the dissidents. The reactionaries, blindly enamoured of the cardinal rights of the constitution, impassioned adherents of the *liberum veto*, were submissive to Repnin when he demanded stagnation of political life, but grew indignant when they were called on by Russia to grant rights to the dissidents. Russia and Prussia also differed in relation to Poland. They agreed on the declaration of 11 November 1766, which was directed against changing the constitution, and demanded unanimity in passing army and taxation bills and in deciding matters of State; but in the demand for toleration and in the very delicate and dangerous question of the dissidents there were differences of a tactical character.

Frederick II, wishing to avoid political entanglements, expressed fears about touching a matter of conscience. His policy was to maintain the constitution in order to plunge Poland into "lethargy". Stanislas Augustus inclined towards granting rights to the dissidents; but was at first firmly for constitutional reform, in the conviction that the breaking of the *liberum veto* was indispensable to any political improvement in Poland. In opposition to the Czartoryskis, who gave way to Repnin in the matter of the constitution, the King defended his standpoint with great energy.

Directly after the Russo-Prussian declaration of 11 November 1766, the King wrote the *Considerations of a Good Citizen*, marked by independence, self-respect and national dignity. It was a summons to the defence of the nation's rights "free of fear as well as of excessive boldness"; it was a warning that future generations would curse those who should yield to violence. It warned the nation of the maxim *divide et impera* as applied by the jealous neighbouring powers in order to frustrate the growth of revenues and forces necessary for defence. It exhorted the Poles not to humiliate themselves in the eyes of Europe and not to lose in the world the reputation of being worthy of sympathy and assistance. It was an attempt to strike sparks of patriotism from the people's hearts, and to encourage them to obey the voice of conscience and honour. In the question of the dissidents, the King sought a middle way between the arrogant Russian demand and Sarmatian fanaticism. His worthiest counsellor, Chancellor Zamoyski, held that the declaration of the foreign powers was already a declaration of war, yet advised pliability in view of the situation of the Commonwealth. Amid the growing passions, middle ways did not lead to understanding. In the words of Frederick II, an explosion was caused by "Asiatic presumption". The imprisonment of spiritual and temporal senators in October 1767, and their subsequent abduction to Russia, called forth an outburst of national feeling heightened by devotion to the Catholic faith. The Bishop of Cracow, Soltyk, the first to be imprisoned, an impassioned advocate of the *liberum veto*, issued on 24 October 1767 a manifesto, full of grief and fear, with a protest against the violation of divine and human laws. "In a terrible moment", he wrote, "in such a moment as has not befallen Poland for centuries, a moment in which the Muscovite troops imprison me and abduct me by force, I, more anxious for the glory and happiness of my nation than for my own fate, thought it essential to write a manifesto. . . . My country, my beloved mother and mother of the liberty of thy children, that dearest jewel deserving the jealousy of the world, weep bitterly

over thy state of contumely, when thy sons adorned with high dignities in the church and senate...are violently taken from thy midst." For the first time in eight centuries the rights of free citizens and the independence of the Commonwealth suffered so violent an attack. A faithful exponent of the age of rationalism, Frederick II yet understood as a politician that violence in matters of religion might be dangerous. In a poem he derided the confederates and calumniated the Polish nation, but as a clear-sighted politician he saw that Russia and Repnin had committed an immense blunder.

Not in the capital, but in the eastern borderlands of the vast Commonwealth, in a small, unknown town which thenceforth became famous, a confederacy of "orthodox Roman-Catholic Christians" was formed. The confederacy of Bar proved at the given moment the only rescue for the threatened and dishonoured State. This was undoubtedly a revolutionary method, but one which was constitutionally established and instinctively felt to be a necessity. The confederate movement and spirit spread from the eastern borderlands to the Baltic, covered Silesia and Pomerania, and devastated considerable tracts of Polish land. Action inspired by religious and national feeling was contaminated by hatred for the King, and by the old anarchy. The struggle was directed against Russia and its omnipotent minister, but at the same time against the King of Poland, regarded as a proconsul of Russia, although Stanislas Augustus was himself grieved to be a victim of Russian violence. There arose tragical entanglements and tragical misunderstandings between the King, the "good citizen", but burdened with dishonourable foreign patronage, and the nation, also burdened, so to speak, with innate distrust and with contumely of the royal majesty. In painful and humiliating experiences in which chivalry was commingled with crime, the soul of the nation was transformed as if in purgatory. These events, so very agitating and full of sad consequences, leading straight to catastrophe, should be considered from a distant historical perspective. Their immediate and closest witnesses wrestled with themselves, often lost in contradictory opinions.

Even Frederick II, closely connected with Russia, did not wish to bear responsibility for Russian policy. In a moment of anger and anxiety, he expressed regret that "the accursed Muscovites did not remain in their retreat", that the Empress Catherine II did not content herself with giving orders to the Russians, without attempting to impose laws on the Poles, for which she did not possess any rights whatsoever (9 September 1769). The election of Stanislas Augustus

would have been excellent, but the unfortunate question of the dissidents spoiled everything. He feared that the dictatorial tone of the Empress might occasion a war with one half of Europe (30 October 1766). He foresaw that the Poles, whether overbold or cowards, would not keep the peace. At the same time in an access of bad humour and entertaining his old grudge, he also expressed himself derogatively about the "vile Englishmen". Russia was guilty because, disregarding the danger, she aggravated the situation and caused storms (7 December 1768). The philosopher-king could not understand the real motives of the confederacy of Bar; but plainly saw its direct political consequences and the growing turmoil, in relation to which he would not remain passive.

The confederates began a desperate struggle against Russia. The penetration of Russia, employing Eastern methods of action, into the internal affairs of Poland and through Poland into Europe opened up a new epoch in modern history, an epoch full of disquietude due to the excessive and never satisfied policy of Russia and particularly to the ambition of Catherine II, keeping the policies of the European powers in a state of continuous tension. The too-frequent competition of the two powers of Central Europe, Austria and Prussia, and particularly Frederick II's compliant attitude towards Russia, contributed in a high measure to her temporary triumph. The spiritual affinity between Frederick II and Catherine II, both worshipped idolatrously by the same advocates and enthusiasts of the ideals of enlightenment, was at the same time a political factor which paved her way into the heart of Europe.

Her action was planned on a very broad basis; its forms were European, but the spirit Asiatic, as Frederick himself remarked. In this combination of events the action of the Polish confederates, ill-advised, but based on an unconscious impulse, acquired universal importance. Unfortunately, the confederates themselves often destroyed their own work, disrupted it with their own hands. Motives of mutual hatred and passion crept into the feelings and impulses of the great and even inspired struggle for the defence of country and faith. In many voivodeships several marshals placed themselves at the head of different confederate organizations, which necessarily led to disorganization. Political combinations connected with the enemy of Christendom, Turkey, as well as with France, failed. Also the reasonable intentions of reconciling King Stanislas Augustus with the confederates failed completely, because of the pride and particularism of the King's personal enemies. This had a fatal

influence on the future of the cause. "Their doings are founded on the air, but they must come down to the earth. I assure them that only at the end they will rub their eyes and ask themselves: Brother, what is going on? Who could have expected that? Nobody is guilty of it"—thus the political and mental condition of the confederates was represented by a prudent Polish lady, Princess Jabłonowska. Dislike and hatred of Stanislas Augustus prompted the confederates to renounce obedience to the King in accordance with the constitution, but against all reason and the real good of the threatened Commonwealth. On the King fell the ignominious suspicion that he had a hand in the abduction of the Polish senators. This terrible rumour spread over the country, poisoning the life of the nation. Like every mean rumour, it maintained itself in an atmosphere of hatred. The author of this tragic misunderstanding, Prince Repnin, admitted, when Stanislas Augustus had already lost his throne, that he had had no share in the abduction.

At the moment, the monstrous suspicion led to the declaration of an interregnum by the confederates. Stanislas Augustus was deposed as an "intruder and usurper" of the Polish throne. This act was the work only of a certain group. Among the better confederate elements the proclamation of the interregnum caused depression. Characteristic is the letter of Bishop Krasieński, the most faithful representative of the ideal of the confederacy of Bar, to Joseph Zaremba, one of its chivalrous leaders, of 27 October 1770: "I ask you to have all possible patience with this unfortunate nation of ours, from which it is difficult to obtain even by begging, imploring and weeping a bit of good order." Krasieński expressed deep regret that he could not bring the nation to "love the integrity of the country and the defence of liberty more than some false point of honour and emulation". His voice was the voice of national conscience testifying to the preservation of the sense of responsibility for the destinies of the whole country. Suffocated in the struggle, it did not vanish without an echo. The confederates followed the advice of the French Colonel Dumouriez, who explained that "nothing was left but to proclaim the interregnum", and spoke in favour of a bold step, a *coup d'état*, to bar the way to negotiations which, in his opinion, were dangerous, but which were actually to lead to reconciliation. The man chiefly responsible for the policy of the confederacy, Count Pac, allowed himself to be convinced that Stanislas Augustus ruled "under the protection of the Russian armed force and during the terrible dictatorship of Prince Repnin, and later was a vile slave and tool of our misfortunes under the iron yoke of the



Muscovites". He decided upon that virtual *coup d'état*, which was not planned originally, because it seemed that "without annihilating that spectre of a king we cannot pass in the eyes of Europe for the representative estates of the Commonwealth". Fighting against a "spectre", however, the confederates were themselves pursuing a spectre, and creating a void, which did not increase the importance of the Commonwealth, but rather exposed it to condemnation. The increasing political excitement led to a real attempt on the person of the King, an attempt unprecedented in the history of Poland, which completely degraded the confederacy in the eyes of the world. The alarmed Generalship disavowed all participation in the mad act, wishing to throw all responsibility from themselves, but could not obliterate the bad impression, could not save the good name of Poland, when the defence of the honour of Poland was the only moral salvation. An attempt on the integrity of the Commonwealth on the part of the three neighbouring powers was already prepared. The attempt performed in the name of the principle of political equilibrium caused a violent upheaval in the East of Europe while the Western powers preserved a far-reaching passivity.

The harassing events reverberated with a painful echo in the internal life of the nation. Before the thunderbolt fell, the forces of the nation became exhausted by struggles lasting several years in the whole area of the Commonwealth. Now they were not sufficient for the defence of the threatened frontiers. It was not possible that the Poles should repel the attack of three immense powers with their own forces. A voice of protest was raised at the sad Diet of 1773, under the chairmanship of the wretched Poniński, by the Lithuanian deputy Reytan, torn by deep sorrow; also the deputy from Pomerania, Wybicki, protested against the attack. But these protests were of no avail, and the unprecedented historical outrage of the First Partition became a fact.

In the almost uniformly sad period of the reign of Stanislas Augustus until the first partition the changing and painful events touched the chords of the Polish soul, calling forth a mental state of high tension. The confederacy of Bar left a deep trace in the spiritual life of Poland. It is true that the feelings did not find full expression and beautiful form. In comparison with the Western European poetry of the second half of the eighteenth century in France, England and Germany, Polish poetry was to a certain extent an echo of the bygone Saxon period and at the same time, as it were, a modest prelude of a future epoch of fuller life, more elevated inspiration

and more perfect form. The hymns, laments, threnodies which originated in the confederacy of Bar are, in spite of their awkward form, reminiscent of the ecclesiastical songs of the past epoch; they were the expression of profound religious feelings, imbued with mystical elements, as well as of national feelings. An almost religious character prevails, the confederate songs are similar to penitentiary psalms, they breathe the sense of guilt and well-deserved punishment, supplicatory voices are heard imploring the help and mercy of God, "though we have deeply offended God", in the "laments" grief is voiced over "the unfortunate Sarmatian land and the fainting native country", and also grief which is at the same time an accusation because of the "discord" of the sons tearing the bowels of the country and disparaging the good name of Poland: "you defile the name of a Pole, being a Pole yourself." The person of the king was a frequent topic of the poets of the confederacy. Inclined to visions, they saw in the king an "apostate", a "scandalizer of the world", but there also appeared defenders of the king, who was exposed to such heavy and really undeserved blows. All varieties of feelings and the whole gamut of moods were reflected in this poetry, which was still far removed from powerful inspiration, but in spite of divergencies between form and feeling contained elements that did not develop until the epoch of the Legions, after the fall of the Commonwealth. Generally speaking, what prevailed in the poetry of the confederacy of Bar was the tone of grief and complaint, and there was no incentive to action. The grief still increased when foreign troops were ravaging the country, when "brother was obliged to bid farewell to brother, when new frontiers tore apart the living organism of the nation". In the song of "grief over the partition of Poland" there sounds a religious tone, reminiscent of the spirit of the confederacy, but we also hear a call to action: "Let us all together begin the defence, let us show the world with our Polish sword that we want to defend liberty and faith, our graves will bear us witness." The shadow of the graves falls on the faith of victory. The call to action was the reflection of the painful and humiliating feeling "that the whole of Poland fell without a shot"; the pride of the Polish nobleman was painfully hurt that he must become an Austrian, Prussian or a "Muscovite groaning under the yoke". Besides grief over the white eagle, fear of the loss of liberty was also voiced. "The laments of the Polish eagle over the fall of the country fettered by three black eagles" contain the accusation: "my own children tear my body to pieces." Yet on the grave a tombstone is

to be erected with the inscription: "here lies the Polish eagle killed without guilt." In those songs there was no powerful inspiration, but these voices came out of the depth of conscience sensitive to the misfortunes of the country.

For the world, for Europe, disturbed on account of the "perverseness" of the reigning sovereigns, was destined a French poem published in 1775: "*Les Funérailles de la Pologne*." Also writers and poets already well-known made themselves heard. Stanislas Konarski, the author of the work on the efficacious method of government, wanted to write an ode for the wedding of Ignatius Potocki with Princess Elizabeth Lubomirska, but wrote an elegy instead. Amid the fanfare the nuptial chords of the lyre were bursting, for Poland was brought to the brink of the abyss, and "a brave and famous nation falls, contrary to all laws, without war and without drawing the sword". Konarski refers to the perpetual pacts of the Jagellons with Brandenburg, to the rescue of the Hapsburgs at Vienna, and eventually to the treaties concluded with the Czar of Russia, Peter I, to indicate the great injury done to Poland "torn to pieces by three majesties". Kniażnin's fable *The White Eagle and the Three Black Eagles* is imbued with melancholy because the one "which was powerful to the world in the East, the South and the North succumbs to violence". The patriotic motive of great suffering is also heard in the elegies of Karpiński. An increasingly perfect form faithfully reflected the feelings penetrating the Polish soul. In 1774 the famous hymn "Sacred love of the dear native land" was written by the great poet bishop Krasicki. There begins a new period of the intellectual life of Poland.

## II. FROM THE FIRST PARTITION TO THE GREAT DIET, 1773-1788

Although the arteries of the Commonwealth were cut, the sources of national life did not dry up. Stanislas Augustus declared: "I do not consider the nation as being near its fall, I rather consider it a nation not yet mature." He remembered that in the fourteenth century France had lost to England one-half of its kingdom, and that in the sixteenth century Spanish troops entered Paris. The Polish Commonwealth still comprised more than 150,000 square miles, and counted some seven million inhabitants. It was able to continue its free existence, although the conditions had become very difficult. In the south Poland had lost its natural support, the Carpathians. The Vistula,

the chief artery of the economic life, was cut. Thanks to the attitude of Russia and England, Danzig and Toruń were left to Poland, but the Prussian customs policy impeded all commercial traffic. To Austria Poland had lost fertile lands and the indispensable salt mines. Russia had made headway towards permanent pressure on Poland from the north-eastern border. Prussia had obtained the smallest amount of territory, but the territory was very important for her consolidation. The geographical situation of the Commonwealth, which had always been difficult, became simply dangerous after the First Partition.

The Russian troops did not leave Poland, and the Prussians watched diligently on her border. The balance of power, raised to the importance of a principle in international relations, was always fluctuating and did not secure the independence and integrity of the State surrounded by three powers which continued to compete with each other, but which did not let the victim slip from their hands. As before, Poland was hampered by the guarantee of the imposed constitution. The establishment of the Permanent Council, to a certain extent, secured greater efficiency of the functioning of the organs of the State between one Diet and the next, but this Permanent Council, introduced and maintained by Russia, bore the stamp of violence and oppression. Nor could the King obtain independence of the Russian ambassador. Count Stackelberg continually and importunately obtruded himself, thus creating suspicion that Stanislas Augustus was the tool of Russia. The Diets were the scene of continuous internal conflicts, in the majority vain; but political thought awakens and becomes more profound in connection with the spiritual regeneration, the development of literature and creative activity in various fields of intellectual life. It was in that period that there arose the notion of the Stanislawian epoch as the epoch of enlightenment, of spreading light and increasing culture, an epoch reminiscent of the ever-memorable Golden Age of Poland in the sixteenth century. The very comparison proves that the elements of Polish culture were preserved in the deeper strata. In spite of political stagnation and the mutilation of the body politic, the intensity and universality of intellectual work increases more and more. The connection of Polish culture with the Western world was unimpaired. Poland continued to follow her ancient historic path.

The stimulus in the transformation of Poland in the second half of the eighteenth century came from France and England. The transformation was coming about slowly, without calling forth the sharp

conflicts which made themselves felt in France in particular. Poland had also to take good care to maintain her own spiritual independence. French and English thinkers exercised their influence on her mentality. From among English philosophers the importance of Locke for the improvement of educational methods became early apparent. The French Encyclopedists exercised considerable influence and Diderot and d'Alembert found ardent advocates even among the clergy. The star of Voltaire shone also on the Polish horizon, and this had some advantageous effects. Rationalism, however, violated the harmony between the old and the new world. A great influence was exercised by Rousseau. Encouraged by the confederacy of Bar, he showed a vivid interest in the Polish Constitution, and even proved an advocate of its principles. His epoch-making treatise on the *Contrat Social* was influencing the transformation of Polish ideas. In his patriotic *Letters* Joseph Wybicki praises the author of that epoch-making work. Besides Rousseau, a high rank in the eyes of Polish statesmen, particularly in those of the King, was taken by the author of *L'Esprit des Lois*, Montesquieu.

Stanislas Augustus was the chief propagator of Polish culture. His court was really a centre of intellectual life. Round the King gathered the most enlightened men, Poles and foreigners. The King surrounded himself with foreigners, despite their extremist views.

The chief source of intellectual transformation and régénération was the Educational Commission established in 1773. The most enlightened men of their time worked on its programme. A special "Commission of National Education Bill" was elaborated by the well-known educationist, Piramowicz. The principles of teaching were adapted to the real needs of national life and education. The Commission comprised all categories of schools, from the Academy down to parochial schools. Much earlier, full understanding for educational work had been shown by Konarski. His "Collegium Nobilium" was for its time an excellent school. Chiefly owing to the initiative and support of Stanislas Augustus, a Military Academy was founded in which excellent men, such as Kościuszko, were trained. The light of learning spread, and, owing to foreign influences as well as to domestic impulses, a literature developed which constitutes one of the glories of that epoch. Independent thought was awakened. "Hereditary ways of speaking and thinking" were submitted to revision and criticism. "Say the truth, say it boldly", proclaimed the prince of the poets of that epoch, bishop Krasicki; and he indeed was speaking the truth, exposing the faults and foibles of private

and public life, but it should be mentioned that his sometimes poignant and sharp criticism always had for its aim the improvement of public life and political reform. Another critic, a historian and official historiographer, who wrote also odes and satires, bishop Naruszewicz, boldly told his contemporaries neglecting to seek light: You have "neither a heart for action, nor brains for the council". It was an admonition to penetrate into one's own weaknesses. "Brothers, this anarchy has overpowered and ruined us, the evil began from us" and the diagnosis of the evil was to lead to the resumption of the neglected work of ages. More and more frequently voices were heard exhorting that the chivalrous tradition of bygone ages should be reassumed. Naruszewicz, when beginning the great work of the *History of the Polish Nation*, said plainly and courageously: "If our Poland experienced detrimental commotions from contiguous armed forces, it was incomparably more severely upset by internal disturbances", and one of the chief sources of weakness was, in the opinion of the historian who wished to serve the truth, the pride of private magnates, the interregna and the election of the Kings.

Following the voice of the King, a lover of the historical sciences, Naruszewicz wrote a life of Hetman Chodkiewicz. At his famous Thursday receptions, the King expressed the wish that there should be presented, on the model of Plutarch, the lives of great Poles. The King honoured them, adorning a great part of the castle with ancient portraits, for which Naruszewicz expressed to the King great gratitude and respect. To Naruszewicz fell the task of sketching the portrait of hetman Chodkiewicz and he did so for a deeper and fundamental reason, for while "the present age being corrupted by effeminacy, *aetas parentum peior avis* does not furnish us with many living models of civic virtues: they should be sought in the graves covering the bones of our more remote ancestors". Naruszewicz raised history to the heights of scholarly research; thanks to the King, a liberal patron, he gathered in the archives and libraries abundant sources for the history of Poland, a collection known and esteemed even to-day as Naruszewicz's *Portfolios*. He had a sense of historical workmanship, wishing "to animate the dead conglomeration of facts" by the spirit of truth, and cared also for an ornate form made attractive by "glibness of the pen". He was in favour of "wise criticism". He did not flatter the nation, he had no wish of embellishing or exaggerating reality, for it was above all his concern, his tendency, to derive from history instruction and a stimulus to improvement and civic service. He said "it was not enough for the historian to write

about what the Poles acquired and how they did it, if in the course of his account he does not show how they were keeping their acquisitions in a flourishing state, or how by negligence and anarchy they weakened and lost them". The lesson derived from the past was to enlighten and uplift the present. In his capacity of official historiographer, Naruszewicz, personally intimate with Stanislas Augustus, wrote within the years 1780-86 six volumes of a "History of the Polish Nation". Special attention is deserved by Naruszewicz's presence in 1787 in Kaniów, whither the king hastened to welcome Catherine II.

In the period of some fifteen years between the first Diet after the Partition and the Great Diet of 1788 there was achieved by successive stages a change in the mental life of the nation. The Diets, though not interrupted, were still encumbered by family feuds and party conflicts, and produced no considerable reforms. Outside their quarrels, however, the symptoms of the awakening of sound political ideas became more and more numerous. In the reformed schools, animated by a new spirit, a new generation was being educated. Slowly the light of learning spread, and Poland's achievements in this field may be included in the history of the age of enlightenment, for they were not merely a reflection, but a part, of the mental life of the West. National consciousness, the consciousness of independence and freedom from foreign guarantees, was intensified, and the necessity of beginning to improve the organism of the Commonwealth was more and more clearly manifested.

The external political situation also called for increased vigilance. Europe began to face new difficulties and entanglements reminiscent of the situation before the Partition. Europe was disturbed by the same energies and ambitions. The so-called Eastern Question became more and more aggravated and threatened a war between Russia and Turkey, which might involve all Europe. The balance of power, which the Partition had restored, was continually shaking. It shook in 1778 owing to the dynastic ambitions of the Hapsburgs: only with difficulty was diplomacy able to restore peace at Teschen, and soon, to Frederick's alarm, the constellation changed by the alliance of the two imperial courts. Frederick suspected Catherine of intending to sign peace at Constantinople, and he expressed himself with particular dislike of the Emperor "of Vienna" who simultaneously coveted Belgrade. The King of Prussia was unable to prevent the formation of close ties between Catherine II and Joseph II; he lived to see the seizure of the Crimea by Russia in 1783, an explicit violation of the peace policy. Almost to the end,

however, he hoped for a new alliance with Russia. After his great historical figure had left the stage, the European situation became so much entangled that a war broke out between Russia and Austria and the Ottoman power. The journey of Catherine II to the south, a trip apparently fantastic but with matter-of-fact ends in view, was the prelude to this sanguinary contest. The Polish Commonwealth was in a high degree perturbed by events in its vicinity. The King, divining the importance of the situation, had hastened in 1787 to Kaniów to discuss with Catherine what Polish policy should be. Connection with Russia, he thought, should provide the necessary advantages for the internal strengthening of the State, and particularly for creating a military force. Though disillusioned by the short and hurried interview, he acquired the conviction that from Russia Poland had nothing to fear, but that she could rely on Russia in any attempt on her territorial integrity. The international political situation stirred the mind of Poland, and the Diet was convoked under the rules of confederacy. Political issues formed the subject of treatises, partly by anonymous authors. In that important moment two names stand out as renovators of Polish political thought: Stanislas Staszic and Hugo Kołłątaj, each in his own way devoted to the salvation of his menaced country.

Stanislas Staszic, born at Piła, which the Partition Treaties gave to Prussia, a townsman's son, was a reformer who pined with ardent love for his unforgotten native land. By inclination and talent a scientist, he was educated chiefly in Paris, and knew Buffon well. At the Collège de France, where the humanities were giving way to the physical sciences, he learned from Buffon how the English applied the doctrine of the sovereignty of the nation. After his return to Poland, he became more and more inclined to undertake important political problems, chiefly under the influence of the former Chancellor, Andrew Zamoyski, a zealous and blameless patriot. He was one of the trusty collaborators of Zamoyski, whom the Diet of 1778 charged with the codification of Polish laws. The next Diet, however, rejected the work, thus occasioning Zamoyski's complaint: *Curavimus Babiloniam*. The echo of this complaint reverberated also in Staszic's life. Within a few years from the time when he first got into touch with the political life of Poland, he published anonymously his truly historic *Observations on the Life of John Zamoyski*, Chancellor and Grand Hetman of the Kingdom. The *Observations* were applicable to the contemporary condition of the Polish Commonwealth. While in the West the reforms concerned political, social or economic matters,



in Poland the existence and independence of the State itself was at stake. Staszic's contemplations of the past were to be a stimulus and inspiration to great civic actions. "Sons of the Sobieskis, Chodkiewiczzes, Zamoyskis, Bolesławs", he cried, "can it be possible that you should perish in dishonour?" He expressed no uniform fundamental view arranged in a system. This townsman, of a class debarred from political rights, embraced with his broad mind and great heart the whole past of the nation, and cherished the ideal of a great regenerated Poland. He had no particularist class feelings and grievances; in his epoch-making *Observations* he addresses himself appreciatively to the gentry, in contradistinction to the "lords", acknowledging in it a class meritorious in the past, but nevertheless as a patriot and wise politician he deeply felt the urgent necessity of extending the conception of citizenship in Poland. In his programme he comprehended the needs of the towns and of the peasantry, his point of departure being the common good of the Commonwealth. He was convinced that the weakness of the State was due to the insufficient engaging of the whole population in the defence of the country. "Highly esteemed gentlemen", he wrote, "you cannot but admit that you are not the whole Polish nation, only one estate, its defensive estate, its equestrian order." Acknowledging the deserts of the gentry he did not conceal its defects, which were the cause of the ruin of the State. He was convinced that when three neighbours "quietly tear away from ten million people a land made more rich by nature and more fertile, there necessarily must be in that State some internal cause for this". As the principal reason for national misfortune he indicated the contempt and imperfection of the laws. "Let us therefore not complain of any one", is his conclusion.

The cities, he held, should obtain their old rights of representation in the legislative bodies. The representatives of the cities and the country gentlemen should sit in *one* house, as in England. To extract from the peasantry the essential force of national defence, their emancipation, conceived profoundly and wisely, was necessary.

Knowing from experience the dangers of free elections, Staszic saw the salvation of the State in a hereditary monarchy, and in view of the complications of foreign policy he considered its introduction so urgent that he even contemplated the abdication of Stanislas Augustus. He thought of various foreign dynasties, the Wettins, the Romanovs, the Hohenzollerns, but he cautioned his readers against a connection with the House of Brandenburg, which "of necessity lies in wait for your ruin, for on all other sides it encounters strong obstacles. Only

Poland leaves an empty space for it. Hence this terror will diligently watch for the occasion when it will be easy for it to stretch to Poland." In his book *Warnings for Poland*, dated 4 January 1790, almost on the eve of the Polish alliance with Prussia, he expressed his fear that the cession of Danzig and Toruń would be the condition. "Let us endeavour to gain allies, but let us not buy an ally", he continued; "let us be armed and have taxes and an army, and allies will no doubt come", and he pointed to Brabant, which, having a united people, money and an army, found an ally who demanded only mutual assistance and friendship.

Staszic considered the possibility of calling to the throne one of the Russian grand-dukes on condition of granting liberty, and regarded as "natural" an alliance with Russia, for which the "Partition of Poland" would be disadvantageous. He expressed fear of an alliance of three powers concluded not with Poland, but about Poland. "Poland", he said, "is still in the fifteenth century, when the whole of Europe is already in the eighteenth."

Having composed his *Warnings to Poland*, he went abroad, with Chancellor Zamoyski and his family. Abroad he stayed, chiefly in Italy, when the destinies of Poland were being decided. Meanwhile, Father Hugo Kołłątaj, a nobleman by birth, enjoying all civic rights, and educated in Italy, had obtained important posts when he returned to Poland after the First Partition. At first he worked in the Commission of National Education, and was entrusted with the important task of raising the old Jagellonian Academy (Cracow University) from its decline. Excessively ambitious, with an acute mind and full of vigour, he early took to political problems. His famous *Letters of an Anonymous Writer to the Speaker of the Diet of 1788* (Stanislas Małachowski) contained a lucid discussion of the contemporary situation and an extensive programme of reform. In Staszic elemental feeling was predominant; Kołłątaj was distinguished by his logic. He possessed immense historical learning, a thorough knowledge of Polish legislation, and great powers of tongue and pen. His *Letters*, published immediately before the epoch-making Diet, were the event of the day. "Everything calls to us", he declared; "we are on the brink of ruin, therefore we should undertake our rescue." The nation "is not without strength, but has no bold and brave leaders, no mutual understanding, for it has exterminated brotherly love in its heart". When the question of the alliance with Russia, leagued with Austria, was to be decided upon, Kołłątaj urged "strict neutrality", alienating neither the two imperial courts nor the King of Prussia. Later,

however, he himself could not find a way out of the magic circle of foreign policy as between Muscovy and Prussia, between Scylla and Charybdis. After Prussia had broken the treaty, he declared for Russia, and then again defended the policy of the patriots who had signed the treaty with Prussia. In domestic reforms he was for a "mild revolution".

During the whole Diet he showed almost feverish activity in proposing reforms. He propounded a project of the constitution in *The Political Law of the Polish Nation*. To the "Illustrious Deputation appointed to draft the Constitution" he addressed an impassioned appeal which belongs to the most splendid manifestations of political thought in Poland. Convinced that the constitution would be epoch-making if it restored a good government, he urged the legislators, "as with a lighted torch, to seek the rights of man, the rights of the community, the rights of the nation". He warmly pleaded in favour of the towns and of the rights of the people, and was not disheartened by the events in France, which surpassed a "mild" revolution: "...let no one be astonished by the cruelty of the people...oppression is its father, and slavery its mother." The advocate of the rights of man, impressed by the fact that "the French people regains its freedom, for which every one of us blesses Heaven", did not leave out of sight the main question, i.e. the passing of the Polish Constitution. He still several times raised his voice in order to accelerate this work which was to be the salvation of the country. This purpose was to be served by his *Last Warning to Poland*, in which he argued that, in view of the near termination of the war, "it is now or never that you can raise yourselves to a state of strength and decent respect, it is now or never that you can ensure for yourselves the succession of the throne, for the government will be a 'vain illusion' if the Polish throne continues to remain elective, if the king is to be a toy". He rightly perceived that at such a time "people should be brought to liberty by degrees", and he became one of the most active men in the preparatory work on the constitution. The corrections made at the last moment in the project of the constitution for the Diet were introduced by him. In this responsible work Kołłataj proved a matter-of-fact politician, in spite of his far-reaching approval of the French Revolution. Consequently he obtained the important post of Vice-Chancellor under the Constitution of the Third of May. In the tragic moment of 1792 he broke down, and exposed himself to criticism and suspicions, particularly during the insurrection of 1794.

## III. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE THIRD OF MAY

"Desiring to make use of the present juncture in Europe and of that moment of impending catastrophe which has restored us to ourselves, free from the shameful commands of foreign violence, valuing dearer than life, than personal happiness, the political existence, the external independence and internal freedom of the nation," the Diet passed the Government Bill of the Third of May, 1791. "The King with the nation, the nation with the King"—this outcry resounded in the Diet and in the Castle, in the capital and in the country. The King won a victory over himself, as did the nation, which had distrusted him. In 1788, after long warning the Diet against breaking with Moscow, he at last submitted and, amid hesitations and anxiety, consented to the alliance with Prussia. He drew closer to the "patriots" and adopted their programme. More and more often deputies cried "The nation with the King", and the King assured the Diet that he was associating himself with the nation. The best men joined hands for the reform demanded by both internal and external necessities. On the eve of signing the treaty, Prussia asked for the presentation of a "draft" of the future constitution. A deputation was therefore chosen to improve the form of government. The Diet believed that, having freed themselves from foreign guarantees, they could freely decide the internal organization of the Commonwealth. At the head of the deputation stood the aged Bishop Krasiński, a witness of the elections of 1733 and 1764, and an ardent participant in the confederacy of Bar. Their first-fruits were the *Principles of the Improvement of the Form of Government*, published on 24 December 1789, and containing in eight articles the chief rules of the constitution. To these rules belonged "the right and power to make laws, and not to submit to any others except those which the Commonwealth alone enacts, the concluding with foreign powers of treaties of peace and alliance as well as declaring wars". Article III aimed at restoring the health of the Polish parliamentary system, purporting that "from now on the Diets should be always ready during a biennial period". Thus the Diet could work for two years without new elections.

The chief author of the *Principles* was Ignatius Potocki, the leader of the patriotic party and the author of the Polish-Prussian alliance. At the beginning of 1791 were published the unalterable *Cardinal Rights*, safeguarding the Catholic religion of the Roman and Greek rites, and in addition the indissolubility of the

Kingdom of Poland and of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with all provinces, towns and ports. The deputy Suchodolski alone opposed the extensive project of the deputation concerning the form of government. This project was published after the Diet had been strengthened by new elections, while the work of Kollataj contained detailed constitutional articles, and unknown authors made proposals to accelerate the passing of the constitution.

The growing anxiety on account of the approaching termination of the Russo-Turkish war and the fear of a peace which would secure for Russia full freedom of movement accelerated the legislative work. Thus was born the idea of proclaiming the foundation and the most essential principles of the constitution by a special legislative act. Hence the project of the Government Bill which was accepted on 3 May 1791. The project was prepared at confidential meetings where the necessity of unity between the King and the nation became apparent. The King, invited by the patriots, presented a project of reform based on his great experience and political and legal knowledge. He knew foreign institutions and particularly esteemed the English Constitution with its division of powers and two-chamber structure of parliament. The ideas derived from the blazing fire of the French Revolution had no convincing power in Poland, in view of the national aim which was present in the minds of the legislators. This aim was not a "logical" socio-ideological construction, but rather the "existence" of the State itself, based on hereditary monarchy, with abolition of the *liberum veto*, and with the responsibility of ministers, and the union of social elements. The estates were preserved, and the gentry were to possess their old privileges. But at the same time, by a law passed on 18 April 1791, the citizens of towns were recognized as "freemen". The historic privilege *Neminem captivabimus*, granted in the dawn of Polish freedom, was extended to the towns, which were also represented in the house of deputies, thanks to Joachim Chreptowicz, a wise statesman. The peasantry, "from under whose hands flows the richest source of national wealth", did not obtain political rights; it was, however, taken "under the protection of the law".

Thanks to the versatile Italian Freemason, Piattoli, the King and the leader of the patriots, Ignatius Potocki, came to an understanding and a *rapprochement* indispensable for the work of reform. Hence the King participated in the secret preparatory work on the constitution. But in spite of his relations with foreigners, such as Piattoli, his countryman Mazzei and the Swiss Glayre, Stanislas Augustus preserved the fundamental autonomy of his own view and

programme. It was no doubt his clear-mindedness and thorough knowledge of Polish reality that made the Government Bill an independent product of Polish thought, reconciling contradictions and achieving concord.

It was expected that the project, with its eleven articles, would be approved by the Diet without discussion. Up to the last moment this project was in detail examined and corrected in order to harmonize the views and remove all doubts. It is also highly probable that the project passed through the King's chancellery. On 3 May 1791 the King exerted all his energy and great presence of mind, several times interposing in the discussion which proved inevitable. All declared that the passing of the Constitution of the Third of May was due to him. This was admitted by his closest collaborators of the time, such as Ignatius Potocki and Kołłataj. It was also a great day for the Diet and for the nation. The Speaker Małachowski dominated the assembly by his goodwill, authority and probity. There still were recalcitrant spirits in the country and ill-omened revolutionary spirits abroad, but in the impassioned days of May 1791 there awoke a feeling of national unity, winning a great moral victory which was the manifestation and foreboding of a new epoch. This was justly estimated by the English statesman, Edmund Burke, who as early as the First Partition of Poland in 1772 did not conceal his opinion that a fact had occurred boding ill for the peace of the world. The constitution now was greeted by him as the noblest benefit received by any nation at any time. He expressed a very flattering and perhaps even too optimistic opinion of the value of the Constitution of the Third of May, as contrasted with the French Constitution, in accordance with his well-known reasonings in the historical pamphlet *Reflexions on the Revolution in France*, and acutely perceived that the constitution "contained seeds of continuous improvement, being built on the same principles which make our British constitution so excellent".

He considered the King worthy to be immortalized by the great master Reynolds, for he "had achieved a great work". Burke's words were the last beam of sunshine in the life of Stanislas Augustus.

By passing the constitution, Poland hoped "to raise herself from humiliation to a condition of independence and security", but just because of that the neighbouring powers pushed Poland off the road of regeneration, hurling her into the abyss of misfortune and anarchy. The invasion of Russian troops in May 1792 and the desertion of Prussia foreboded the end of the State. The defence in 1792 was weak. The King abandoned the constitution to which he had sworn, and

later he did not spare himself bitter reproaches for having been "unable either to save the country or perish in its defence". The insurrection of Kościuszko was the last armed action of the independent Commonwealth, and the summoning of the peasants to its defence by recognizing their civic rights was its last political act.

The two last Partitions of Poland were a sudden and unforeseen catastrophe. The ruins of the overthrown Commonwealth fell on a nation living and eager to live on. Every independent Polish action, whether political or military, was calling forth acts of violence on the part of the neighbouring powers. Poland was falling not because she could no longer live, being exhausted, but because she wanted to live, being strengthened by the spirit of political revival. As the result of the negligence of past generations, she did not find in herself enough strength to defend her integrity and independence. But in that last period of independent existence, in the reign of Stanislas Augustus, so much light was kindled that, in spite of political ruin, Poland entered on a new epoch of national life. Out of deep sorrow caused by the great misfortune an intensified love of the native country was born.

The poetry of that time was the expression of grief and despair, but in spite of everything also of hope and faith in the future. The *Polish Bard* was written at the most sorrowful moment of the fall of the Kościuszko Insurrection and the massacre of Praga. Its author, prince Adam Czartoryski, the son of the governor of Podolia, was returning in great haste from England, where he was being educated, in order to take part in the armed struggle, but in the meantime the national uprising was suppressed. Czartoryski was forced to go as hostage to Petersburg to the court of Catherine II. Out of nostalgia and despair arose this poem, faithfully reflecting the feelings, sorrows and hopes of that generation. The Bard conducting the youth over sad paths has his model in the Divine Comedy of Dante, and the whole atmosphere of Czartoryski's poem received a strong stimulus from the Romantic English poetry of that time. The *Polish Bard*, as was rightly pointed out by Joseph Kallenbach, "is the first attempt to express in Polish poetry the purest, noblest national feelings after the loss of the country". It should be mentioned that prince Adam Czartoryski, a deputy to the Great Diet, was a participant in the rising of 1830 and that subsequently he spent many years as an émigré in the period of the most sublime inspirations and flights of Polish thought. The continuity of spiritual life imbued with the national ideal was a powerful element of the post-partition history of Poland.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SECOND PARTITION (1793)

ALL the world knows that the Poland of the First Partition endured for barely twenty years. The three-power dismemberment, proclaimed in 1772, accepted by Poland in September 1773, and finally ratified by the Diet in 1775, was transformed beyond recognition in 1793. The two-power dismemberment of that year gave the Republic its death-wound, and in 1795 it ceased to live.

"This Second and fatal Partition, like the First, was a pure aggression, favoured by the momentary state of Europe. In 1787, as in 1768, a Turkish struggle with Russia precipitated change. Once again a point was reached at which the Russian Empress found it more profitable to incorporate Polish provinces within her empire than to struggle for hegemony over the existing Polish State. This time, however, Catherine's choice was more deliberate, and it led to a more flagrant crime. It had seemed that, to the Polish body politic, the amputation of 1772 had been hardly more than the surgical blood-letting which the men of that day practised with eager confidence on their own bodies. Within twenty years of the First Partition, Poland, robbed of a great part of her unwieldy empire, gave striking proof of her capacity and desire for progress. While Catherine of Russia boasted that the Partition had gone off as smoothly as butter, the Poles might claim that within the framework of a smaller state they had proved that they could educate and legislate with the best.

In 1793, the foremost ruler in Christendom, served by Suvorov and a well-trained army, flushed with military, naval and diplomatic triumphs, and restrained by no great State or statesman, deliberately elected to assassinate a progressive Republic in which her friend had ruled for nearly thirty years. Her accomplice, Prussia, was now a purblind power whose treachery made its greed yet more repulsive. The dismal story, unrelieved by any generous trait in outer Europe, is darkened by the inner history of Poland. While in the earlier convulsion the men of Bar, like the French on the morrow of Sedan, or the Boers thirty years later, had saved their nation's honour, in 1793 the men of Targowica made it impossible to declare that Poland was guiltless of her own destruction.

By the First Partition Catherine had created, at a great price, the



Polish dependency that she desired. Supreme in Courland, she had screened her western frontier with a buffer-state across which Russian troops could march, secure and well-provisioned, into Prussia, Austria or Turkey. The rivalry between the two great German powers seemed to ensure their competition for her alliance, and the skilful use of Polish resources might well make that alliance decisive. ✓ To secure the subservience of Poland, Catherine had kept Stanislas upon the throne, where his abilities, and especially his talent for pleasing, won him, in quiet times, a considerable following. At his side she placed her ambassador, Stackelberg, endowed with ample funds. ✓ The Polish constitution, which the three powers guaranteed, rested upon fundamental laws. Besides the *liberum veto* and tolerance of the dissidents, who might even have three representatives in the Diet, there were now important new provisions. Henceforward the King must be a native Polish gentleman, and two reigns must intervene before his son or grandson could mount the throne. A Permanent Council of thirty-six members, moreover, elected biennially by the Diet, was established under the presidency of the King. ✓

Through Stackelberg and Stanislas, therefore, Catherine reigned in all but name at Warsaw, but she must pay a fourfold price. Money, for King, ambassador and magnates, was always indispensable. In Galicia, the Austrians now ruled a Slavonic province which promised them, besides what they had gained in wealth and man-power, an abiding cultural and ecclesiastical influence in Poland. Prussia, moreover, now flanked the frontier of the Republic from Poznań to Toruń and beyond, and, in a future war, Königsberg might be a sally-port against the Muscovites, instead of a Prussian hostage. Above all, hatred of Russia was not extinguished by her "benefits". If, through the Permanent Council, the Poles had gained a firm administration, both these innovations, though projected and postulated by Polish statesmen and writers, seemed Russian and therefore in Polish eyes detestable.

None the less, in spheres where Russia could permit but not command, half a generation of peace brought Poland welcome progress. Her population, probably below 7,500,000 after the Partition, had gained at least a million. The royal revenue was doubled. From a nominal 12,000, the army rose to 18,000 men, well-trained and well-equipped. Magnates and King alike introduced new industries, not always without success. Education, long a Jesuit preserve, was modernized and diffused more widely. While in many towns the middle class was rising, Warsaw became a city of 100,000 inhabitants, and something of an eastern Paris. Without any startling

metamorphosis, Poland thus joined in the progressive movement of Enlightened Europe.

By 1787, a turning-point in the history of partition, however, it could only be said that new and hopeful growth had been begun. For a true national regeneration both time and leadership were lacking. "The Polish nation", that is, such of the upper class as diplomatists were wont to meet in Warsaw, remained, so men unbiassed by great intimacy or sympathy reported, marked by "extreme versatility", "inconsequence" and a "turn to chicanery", entangled in "labyrinths of intrigue, faction and self-interest". The Republic was perhaps at once too vast and too feeble to inspire a spirit of self-sacrifice. "The policy of all great families", it was said, "is to divide their influence, and to attach themselves collusively to opposite parties, in order that the mediation of the victors with foreign courts may protect the vanquished." Factions jarred constantly, but few quarrels were pressed to extremes. ✓

Throughout Europe, indeed, no nation had greatly changed its character or policy since 1773. In the skill and energy of national leaders, on the other hand, almost revolutionary changes had taken place. These, in the main, had tended towards the elevation of Russia. Each of the western powers, Britain, the Dutch, France and Spain, had lost prestige and resources in the war of American Independence. From this conflict the Germans held aloof, but their losses of directing minds might well prove more grievous still. In 1787, Kaunitz, though destined to give a few more years to Austria, was seventy-six, and, since 1780, the advent of Joseph II in place of the great Queen had reduced the realism of Austrian policy. Prussia in 1786 had exchanged the architect of its greatness for a genial and impulsive libertine, Frederick William II, aided by Hertzberg, a doctrinaire. Catherine, meanwhile, in all save personal character, had mounted high. In 1773 she had been at once insecurely throned, faced with a terrible revolt, powerless to end the Turkish war, served by an elderly valetudinarian and succoured by a dangerous ally. In 1787 she could despise the mute pretensions of her son; Pugachev and Frederick were dead; she had given Russia a mass of institutions; the Germans acclaimed her as the arbiter who had rescued them, at Teschen (1779), from internecine war. Against her Armed Neutrality Britain had chafed in vain, and in 1783, regardless of all the continental powers, she had seized the Crimea. Served by brilliant "eagles" who were in some sense of her own creation, she could now dream of driving the Turks from Europe and of setting a new Russian Eastern Empire in their place.

Since 1781, before the twice-renewed Prusso-Russian alliance reached its term, Catherine had reverted to the Austrian connection of an earlier age. Frederick valued both the Turks and peace too highly to aid in disturbing them; Joseph was ripe for adventure. To attack the Turks and to join forces with her new ally, the road through southern Poland would be invaluable, and the Republic was rich in horses and in grain. In 1778, when Prussia and Austria were at war, she had counted upon Polish aid if forced to intervene. Despite their community of interest with the Poles, the Turks, humbled in 1774, could hardly expect the Republic to obstruct her.

Since the Peace of Teschen and the Austrian alliance of 1781, indeed, Catherine had experienced one rebuff. The League of German Princes, devised by Frederick to frustrate the Austrian designs upon Bavaria, limited that hegemony in Germany to which the German-born Empress aspired. For its efficacy, however, it depended upon Prussian vigour, and it was not yet certain that the mainspring of his State had not been slackened by Frederick's death. If not, in an age of shifting alliances and ambitious projects, Catherine and Poland might in their several ways find Prussia dangerous, for her army was reputed the first in Europe, and she needed a slice of Poland if her new frontiers were not to remain grotesque. Although Poland had lost her Baltic coast-line, Danzig and Toruń were still commercial and military threats to eastern Prussia.

The death of Frederick did much to encourage that wide-ranging speculation in which contemporary politics abounded. Few thoughts of history, morals or religion, and fewer still of race, restrained the adventurous fantasy of statesmen. Between the Partitions of Poland, notions of Polish aggrandizement at the expense of Turkey, and plans of alliance to comprise the rival German powers or France and Russia, alternated among those who could make the policy of nations. Catherine and Joseph alike deemed it feasible to drive the Turks from Europe and to divide the spoil. The so-called "Greek project" envisaged a Balkan empire for Catherine's new-born grandson, Constantine, and the Black Sea littoral with certain Mediterranean islands for Russia. Had not Britain once offered her Minorca in return for a restoration of the status of 1762? Bosnia and part of Serbia might fall to Joseph, and, if necessary, so men like Hertzberg calculated, Prussia could be solaced by Polish provinces, ceded in return for some equivalent in the south. An indeterminate factor lay in the ambitions of Potemkin, that fertile organizing genius whom Catherine sometimes in secret addressed as "Husband", who had

purchased vast estates in Poland, and who, though alien-born and Greek in faith, was sometimes thought of as its future King.

Early in 1787, the ground, both territorial and political, for such changes was surveyed by Catherine in her famous journey to the Crimea. Directed by the tireless Potemkin, the august procession made its slow way by sledge more than five hundred miles from St Petersburg to Kiev, thence some two hundred by barge upon the Dnieper, to reach Sevastopol after a sumptuous journey of some 1100 miles. At Kiev, the cradle of the Russian faith, given back by Poland a century earlier, Catherine and Potemkin received the Polish opposition, with scions of the Branicki, Potocki and Sapieha families at its head. Felix Potocki, it is said, returned to Poland with the expectation of becoming Stanislas' successor. Their desire for the immediate recall of Stackelberg, still less for that of the King, however, found no encouragement. By a humiliating chance, Stanislas, with two nephews and several high officials, had been waiting seven weeks at Kaniów to greet the Empress at the extremity of his dominions. He could offer his best endeavours to range Poland on her side, asking in return the succession of his nephew Stanislas and an increase in his own revenue and royal power. If war brought victory, Poland should receive an outlet on the Black Sea.

The sight, after nearly thirty years, of a pensioner reported as "entirely led by pleasure" was not likely to seduce an autocrat whose intimate was her hero and genius, Potemkin. Alliance with Russia might well be refused by the Polish nation, of which nine-tenths detested her. Catherine therefore thought it best to defer her answer. With a vast retinue of brilliant foreigners and Russians, she swept on to view Potemkin's great creations in the Crimea, to receive Joseph II for prolonged discussions, to rehearse at Poltava Peter's great triumph over Sweden, and to savour once again the coolness of Moscow towards herself. The mighty tour completed, she was surprised by a Turkish preventive onslaught recalling that of 1768. Again her spokesman at Constantinople was imprisoned and her southern frontiers threatened with attack. This time, however, Russia had expanded to Sevastopol, and the Turks made straight for the source of the new Russian menace, Potemkin's new dockyard upon the Dnieper at Kherson. Though ill-prepared, Russia replied by moving against Ochakov and, as before, towards the Danube. Poland admitted the Russian troops, and Catherine requested her adherents to refrain from confederating in her favour. During the

winter, the several parties in Poland, like the several powers in Europe, eagerly debated their policy towards the war.

The year 1788 revealed the results of these meditations and debates. Britain, remembering the Armed Neutrality and the Russo-French commercial treaty, took up an attitude of strict neutrality. Austria stood firmly by her new ally and marched on Jassy. Sweden suddenly moved against Russia, causing panic in the almost defenceless capital, and paralysing a naval attack, like that of 1770, on Turkey from the Baltic. In Poland the King's party were for aiding Russia and thus purchasing a moderate improvement in the constitution. The so-called Patriots, however, were eager to throw off the Russian yoke and to make of Poland an enlightened and independent state. This they could do only by securing another protector, and one superior to the Turks and Swedes. With France inert and Austria Catherine's ally, this could be only Prussia.

In Prussia, indeed, they saw the author of the last partition, and, as rumour often averred, the aspirant for Great Poland. But Prussia was no longer bound to Russia nor to the policy of Frederick the Great. She was now the friend of Britain and of the Dutch. Under her patronage, Poland might be admitted into a grand federative system, comprising those powers and several more, which seemed to be taking shape in Europe. In area and resources Poland far surpassed Prussia. Her King had now accepted Catherine's proposal for a Russo-Polish alliance which would safeguard Poland against further Prussian aggression. On both schemes, however, the Diet had still to pronounce its verdict. So bitter was the feeling against Russia, that the Poles could shut their eyes to the insatiable character of the Hohenzollerns and to their traditional hostility towards themselves. Frederick had taught the Prussians that this despicable race was cowardly in danger, overbearing in success, noisy but not formidable, "mere wind"—and the lesson was never forgotten.

Early in October 1788, the Diet met at Warsaw, with Małachowski, "the Polish Aristides", in the chair. The capital, flooded with visitors from Poland and other lands, seethed with excitement, and many hurled at the pro-Russians the insulting title "Parasites". The self-styled Patriots arrayed against the King both ultra-conservatives, who wished golden liberty restored, and Progressives, who would have Poland democratized and strengthened. Though for different reasons, neither the Court nor the discontented opposed confederation, a device which enabled the Diet by a simple majority to increase the army and the taxes and to reform defective institutions.

On October 13, the Prussian envoy Buchholtz declared in the name of Frederick William that the alliance proposed by the Empress could only be directed against the Turks, whose conduct towards Poland had been faultless, or against himself. If the Republic desired an ally, he offered Prussia. A stronger Polish army would serve both nations' needs. Such language, from a sovereign of whom almost anything was credible, caused the enraptured Diet to despise the prudence recommended by their King. A week later, they unanimously voted for an army of 100,000, and proceeded to safeguard it against Russian misuse by establishing a War Commission of eighteen. Despite the peril of his country, Stackelberg threatened the Empress's vengeance upon Poland if the constitution of 1775 were overthrown. Buchholtz, aided by a persuasive Italian, Lucchesini, countered with a declaration that Prussia deemed Poland free to make internal changes. Thus encouraged, the Diet destroyed the institution that had been enforced by Russia, the Permanent Council. While negotiating for a Prussian alliance, they demanded the withdrawal from Polish territory of Russian troops. "Their folly (*nullité folle*)", wrote the infuriated Catherine, "will drive them from one extravagance to another, and the time will come when they will see and repent of their stupidity." Blind to the merits of such thinkers as Staszic, Kołłątaj and Ignatius Potocki, whose example Poles are proud to follow, she could none the less estimate the immediate prospects aright.

The Empress herself, cheered by Potemkin's long-delayed capture of Ochakov in December, bore with invincible courage the many misfortunes of 1788. Even the defection of a cherished Favourite did not break down her splendid health. At sixty, an Englishman reported her as "less addicted to illness than any woman of her age I ever saw". Her written mockery of "Ge" and "Gu", the Kings of Britain and of Prussia, no less than her outbursts against their pretensions and their malice, bears the hall-mark of unbroken vigour. Her statesmanlike insight doubtless taught her that a Prusso-Polish alliance could not be lasting. Instead of permanent enmity with Russia and in Poland a strengthened neighbour, Prussia must soon desire the collaboration of her former ally and the provinces of her former victim. If Austria had not clamoured for the end of the Turkish war before venturing on a new war against Prussia, Catherine might have met the Polish challenge with overwhelming force. Instead, she contented herself with inciting a Ukrainian *jacquerie* against the Polish landlords, and, after vainly exploring plans for the convoy of Russian

troops to and fro, she quietly evacuated Poland. No one who knew her could suppose that such a humiliation could safely be inflicted by the Republic.

The campaign of 1789 went far towards shattering that bulwark of Polish independence—the Russo-Turkish war. As in 1770, the Russian victories were almost past belief. Suvorov, subordinating by the force of genius his Austrian allies, shattered an enemy four times as numerous as their joint forces at Fokshani (1 August). On the Rymnik, some seven weeks later, against still greater odds, he proved that in him Catherine possessed a matchless instrument of power. The relics of the Grand Vizier's army of 90,000 fled from Moldavia; Potemkin captured Bender; the Austrians marched into Belgrade and Bucharest. The new danger to the Imperial courts from Poland was counterbalanced by the retirement of the Swedes after two defeats by sea. As in 1770, however, distant defeat had not subdued Constantinople, and Russia was hard pressed to find resources for the next campaign.

Meanwhile, shielded by the Turks and Swedes, and indirectly by the British and Prussian check to the Danish auxiliaries of Russia, the Polish Patriots had been grappling with their heavy task. The fantastic notion of enlisting and paying 100,000 men had yielded place to a plan for 60,000, to be supported in part by foreign loans and in part by new taxes on the nobles and clergy. The reformers determined to aim at securing a stronger government under a hereditary king, and an equal alliance with Prussia. The constitutional demands of the towns were marked by the Diet for investigation, and a committee on fundamental rights was established. Expectations that Galicia would rejoin the Republic ran high, and in December a general thanksgiving was resolved on for the happy deliverance of Poland from Russian oppression.

At the close of 1789, therefore, despite the victories of Russia, the European situation seemed to favour at least the temporary emancipation, the reform, and even the aggrandizement of Poland. While Joseph II was mortally ill, Austria was faced with revolt, actual or imminent, in Belgium, Hungary and Galicia. Catherine, indeed, might boast that, within sound of the Swedish guns, she and her new Favourite, Zubov, were translating Plutarch into Russian. But she had two wars upon her hands, and, with France in revolution, no hope of any fresh ally. Frederick William, on the other hand, was allied with Britain and the Dutch, and supported by Sweden, Poland, the Turks, and the Austrian rebels. With his famous army unscathed

by war and inspired by its triumphant intervention in Holland (1788), he might surely humble Joseph in Germany and Catherine in Poland. A Prusso-Turkish treaty, a Prusso-Polish treaty and Prussian hegemony in Germany and Europe—such seemed the prospect for 1790.

Before the end of March, the Polish portion of Frederick William's vision was achieved in fact. Prompted by Hertzberg, Prussia had demanded Danzig and Toruń in return for her alliance and a good commercial treaty. The Patriots' aggrieved reception of this demand went far to support the judgment of the British representative at Warsaw that the Poles were rather anti-Russian than pro-Prussian. But they rejected an Austrian offer of treaties of commerce and guarantee, and entered upon a mutual pledge with Prussia for defence. Prussia was to furnish 14,000 infantry and 4000 cavalry, Poland, said at this time to have 43,960 troops, 4000 and 8000 respectively. Any attempt by Russia or Austria to revive their rights as guarantors in Poland was acknowledged as a *casus foederis* by Prussia.

To secure the adhesion of Poland, Frederick William had even expressed approval of her plan for the hereditary succession, in a strengthened Republic, of his rivals, the Saxon house. In February 1790, however, five weeks before the signature of the agreement, Joseph died. In him Catherine mourned her best friend, yet his death smoothed her path to victory. His brother and successor, the cautious, experienced Leopold II, imported into the embarrassed affairs of Austria the policy of a wise solicitor. By direct approach to Prussia and to pacific Britain, he endeavoured to prevent new litigation, while by posting armies behind the Giant Mountains, he safeguarded Austria against attack.

During the four months after the death of Joseph, many-sided negotiations went on, and the integrity of Poland not seldom appeared to be in danger. Austria and Prussia, like Poland with Stanislas upon the throne, suffered from the diverse aims of their individual spokesmen, while Potemkin, bent on detaching at least south-eastern Poland, made Russia more than ever incalculable. At midsummer, Austrians and Prussians met in the Silesian village of Reichenbach. There for a month they bargained, while, on both Danube and Baltic, Russia tasted defeat. Svenskund (9 July 1790) was a shattering Swedish triumph. Poland might have emerged with her northern provinces curtailed; her southern, expanded; and perhaps her independence guaranteed. In the end, however, the Hertzberg plan of territorial exchanges collapsed. A new war was averted, and Austria accepted



the mediation of the Triple Alliance for peace with the Turks and Belgians. In effect, by the Convention of Reichenbach (27 July), Austria abandoned Russia, and Prussia abandoned Poland.

Poland, her army strengthened though still small, and her plans for a hereditary monarchy active, must now trust for defence against Russia to the Turkish and Swedish forces, to the Prussian treaty and to the statesmanship of the Triple Alliance. One bulwark quickly fell, for, in August, Gustavus made peace with Catherine at Verelä on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum*. At the same time, by elevating no cession of territory and rejection of Russian interference to the rank of fundamental laws, the Diet was challenging both its new and its old protectors. The succession of the Saxon Elector was pressed on, although he hesitated to accept the honour. In December, by storming Ismail, Suvorov regilded the Russian arms. Catherine, renouncing her wider dreams of conquest, made no secret of her determination to keep Ochakov, which was the key to both Bug and Dnieper, and to make the Dniester her frontier. Russia would thus retain easy access by land to the Danube and by sea to Constantinople.

The campaign of 1791, it was clear, would be fought to determine Catherine's failure or success. Would Europe protect Turkey and Poland against her? France, indeed, was paralysed by the Revolution, but Austria was herself again, and might even combine with Prussia to curb Russia and intervene in France. Britain, moreover, had settled a menacing dispute with Spain, and, under Pitt, aspired to give Europe peace and the rule of law. In Pitt's view, the balance of power, her Prussian ally and her expected markets in Poland and Turkey, must all be secured against Russian attack. He toyed with the idea that Poland might in future furnish Britain with the indispensable marine supplies for which she had been wont to look to Russia. To recover Ochakov, he was prepared to use British sea-power and to marshal a vast alliance. Prussia, though Potemkin offered a new Partition, was eager to concur. Catherine's advisers urged withdrawal, but her pride and energy prevailed. The vested interests of British merchants and manufacturers supported her, Vorontsov, her envoy in London, roused the Opposition, and Fox earned a statue beside Cicero and Demosthenes in her palace grounds. British opinion rejected a war for Ochakov, and Catherine triumphed. Peace with the Turks, who would thus regain Moldavia, only awaited negotiation.

Poland, meanwhile, had brought to a dramatic close her long-drawn struggle for regeneration. In November 1790, the dietines chose new

deputies, who were admitted to the confederated Diet of 1788 beside the old. This "Four Years' Diet" now contained some 500 members. Their establishment of a worthy constitution was stimulated by recurrent rumours of a new Partition. The leading Patriots met in secret under the inspiration of the King, and Stanislas himself drafted the project of 1791. When Bulgakov, Stackelberg's successor, got wind of it, the plan was hurried through the Diet amid scenes of wild enthusiasm. Then and there, on 3 May, the King swore to the new constitution. The country and the foremost men in Europe acclaimed it; Frederick William gave it a repeated welcome; Leopold commended it to the sovereigns. The British envoy, indeed, reported that he himself had been forced to hold the language of approbation, and that Warsaw acquiesced rather than approved. The Elector of Saxony demanded time to study it; Potemkin, it was said, could not conceal his dissatisfaction; and Catherine, some months later, refused to recognize a measure in which, she said, not one-third of the nation concurred.

Posterity, none the less, joins with the best contemporary opinion in deeming the Constitution of the Third of May one of the greatest achievements in Polish history. That incandescent moment, when Stanislas and his parliament, having sworn to the constitution in the Cathedral, joined in the *Te Deum* to the thunder of the Castle guns has never lost its inspiration. It had been proved that ordered liberty, evolved in England and analysed in France, could be adapted by another nation to its special needs. The age was an age of monarchy, and the Poles had long been proud of their republic. Yet while the French uprooted monarchy, the Poles made it respectable. The "Revolutionists" might be "a few, and those young people without experience and without calculation of the effects", lacking unity, knowledge of the country, and attention to the army and to finance. But they were, like none of their precursors, at once enthusiastic, disinterested and enlightened. The Constitution might be abolished, but not the Patriots' fame.

Poland, by the first of the eleven articles, remained Roman Catholic, but tolerant, save of apostasy from the national faith. The nobles retained their privileges; townsmen remained eligible for ennoblement; agreements between peasants and their lords came within the purview of the law; immigrants received safeguards. The legislature of two chambers was to include assessors from the towns. Apart from sudden emergencies, it would meet every two years, as well as four times in a century to revise the constitution. The *liberum veto*

and "confederation" vanished. The King might propose laws, but these must be laid before the dietines. He received a suspensive veto from one Diet to the next. Executive power he shared with a council of six Guardians of the Laws, comprising the Primate (as head of the Educational Commission) and the heads of five departments. The throne remained elective but in families, of which the Saxon was to be the first, the Elector's daughter becoming Infanta of Poland. The King, having sworn to the constitution and the *pacta conventa*, became sacrosanct and irresponsible. He received the rights of pardon, of command in war, and of nominating bishops and civil and military officials, but the Guardians of the Laws were always at hand to frustrate autocracy. Such was the constitution in whose honour a new church, that of Divine Providence, was to be built in Warsaw.

The lull in Europe which had made possible the Constitution of 3 May outlasted 1791. Until peace with the Turks had been made and the danger of a German war averted, Catherine would not move. In a fourth campaign her armies could not but be sick and shrunken and her war-chest low. While Austria and Prussia negotiated without ceasing, the Empress, therefore, merely courted Gustavus III, and held aloof from Poland. Her attitude contributed on the one hand to deter the Saxon Elector from accepting the Polish succession, on the other, to impel the German powers towards closer union. Their dread of Russia made them favour Poland, and for a moment they sought to win the Empress to a three-power guarantee of its integrity. Thousands of Catherine's subjects, it was said, were seeking refuge in the Republic. Austria at least honestly favoured the Saxon succession and the maintenance of the Third of May, which was challenged only by Felix Potocki and his friends in exile. The Poles even wished Britain and the German powers to approach Catherine and the Saxon Elector on their behalf. Meanwhile the course of events in France alternately promised peaceful settlement and invited intervention.

In August 1791, the diplomatists reaped a sudden harvest. At Sistova, Austria made peace with the Turks, and Russia bade fair to follow. Prussia and Austria, their eyes fixed upon France, arrived at an *entente* which united them in accepting the Polish constitution and in leaving Russia with no ally. In October, moreover, Potemkin's death robbed Catherine of her foremost collaborator in Turkish and Polish problems.

Early in 1792, however, events beyond the foresight or control of Poland let loose upon her the threatened storm. At Jassy, the Russo-

Turkish peace was signed, and Catherine's armies were thus set free. Immediately afterwards, Frederick William inherited Ansbach and Baireuth, arousing the jealousy of Austria and stimulating ideas of territorial exchange and compensation.

Next, Prussia and Austria laid down the terms of their alliance for joint military action in the west. While the Hohenzollern thought always of Polish provinces, the Habsburg wished Poland entire and independent. But without Prussian help, Austria could neither save her Belgic provinces, nor regain Alsace, nor rescue Louis XVI and his Austrian queen. She therefore accepted the Prussian amendment to the Polish clause in their agreement. Instead of *the* free constitution of 3 May, the two powers merely undertook to respect *a* free constitution.

In mid-February 1792, within ten days of signing this ominous convention in Berlin, the Prussians learned that Catherine would move her Turkish army into Poland, compensating, if need be, the German powers. Before the month was over, their minister reported that she would never tolerate the Third of May. She repudiated Partition, but he was far from convinced. At this moment the death of Leopold removed the Poles' chief hope. His stiff and inexperienced successor, Francis II, turned from Kaunitz to younger and rasher counsellors, and a Spielmann could not face Catherine the Great. Hopes of the Vistula frontier brought Frederick William to the Russian side, and this in turn revived the Austrian plan for gaining Bavaria in exchange for Belgium. Before the soldiers took the field, the diplomats of the three powers were making free with Poland's future.

On 20 April, France declared war on Austria, fulfilling thus the dearest hopes of Prussia. Frederick William now became the indispensable partner, entitled to vast compensations. In fighting revolutionary France he was at once enfeebling his rival's old ally and propitiating Russia, who would dispose of Poland. The invincible Prussian army, he calculated, would conquer the Vistula beyond the Rhine. Without definitely agreeing on their aims, their tactics or their rewards, Austria and Prussia marched westward in equal force.

Catherine was thus set free to deal with Poland. The murder of Gustavus III at the end of March had removed Sweden from the list of complicating factors, and the increasing violence of the revolutionaries in France sharpened the zeal of the autocrat against "the mob of Warsaw". With 100,000 men upon the frontiers, she outnumbered their possible field armies by more than two to one. The

net result of the Four Years' Diet had been to increase the power of Stanislas, a king too elderly, too luxurious and too prudent to defy the avalanche. Catherine, moreover, had long been the patron of a Polish Opposition, small indeed, but led by three conspicuous magnates, Potocki, Rzewuski and Branicki, now in St Petersburg. Against the confederated Diet these men could be made the framework of a counter-confederation inviting the Empress to vindicate the real will of Poland. In April, one week after the French declaration, she dictated to them a manifesto against every innovation of the Third of May. Thus was formed the so-called Confederation of Targowica of 14 May 1792.

The haste and violence of Catherine's action owed something to her young ambitious Favourite, Zubov. Only the return of the minister, Bezborodko, secured an intimation to Austria and Prussia of her impending stroke. Having invited these her co-guarantors of the Polish constitution to collaborate at Warsaw against revolution, she bade Bulgakov denounce the Diet to Stanislas and notify the Russian invasion (18 May). The Russian armies forthwith crossed the frontier.

Within four months, Catherine's bold stroke had proved successful. The Targowica confederation, indeed, did not prove that "the nation" was seriously divided, and the Poles rallied round their King, who pledged his life to their defence. But they had seen their friends—Austria, Saxony, the Turks, the Swedes, the western nations—fail them one by one, while Prussia, their pledged protector, was ripe for treachery and occupied in the west. Their own attempt to arm came too late. Eleventh hour votes of men and money availed as little as the King's brave words. When, on 8 June, Frederick William shamefacedly evaded his engagements, he stammered out to her diplomatist what was in effect the doom of Poland.

The country indeed was spacious; the Russian armies, relatively small; and earlier invaders had found that, when Warsaw fell, the national war began. A hero in the making, Prince Joseph Poniatowski, led one of the two small forces which faced the eight Russian *corps*. Only retreat was possible, but in several bloody encounters, notably at Zieleńce, his men displayed their worth. His subordinate, Kościuszko, made a glorious struggle against heavy odds at Dubienka on 18 July. But Suvorov had taught the Russians that there was no limit to their powers of marching and conquering, while the Polish masses cared little for reform, and their King was no adventurer. Diplomatic relations between the two courts continued, and Stanislas

hoped that the offer of the Polish Infanta's hand to Catherine's grandson might save the country and the constitution. The Empress, however, demanded that he should submit to Russia and subscribe to the confederation.

On these terms, accepted by a Council on 23 July, the brief war ended. While a few Patriots and many army leaders fled abroad, the men of Targowica spread their confederation over Poland, and through it Catherine ruled. She, meanwhile, had paved the way for a no less signal triumph over Austria and Prussia. Leaving unanswered their suggestions of concert in Poland until her conquest was complete, she secured the prolongation for eight years of her treaty of 1781 with Austria, and revived with Prussia the alliance of 1768. All that the Germans gained was the right to share in the Polish settlement, which in any event could not be durable without their acquiescence. With Austria vacillating and Prussia thirsting for the Vistula, the fate of Poland now hung upon the fate of France.

On 20 September 1792 the course of history was changed by the cannonade at Valmy. The old régime, it seemed, was not to be restored by foreign force. Within six weeks, the routed Germans were struggling on their own side of the Rhine with the vanguard of the French Republic, while the inevitable negotiations between Austria and Prussia revealed and intensified their discord. Austria stood to lose Belgium at the least, and could not escape a new campaign. Frederick William, less deeply committed in the west, therefore brazenly claimed to be a mere auxiliary in an Austrian quarrel, and demanded a part of Poland as the price of continuing to serve. Once again the Austrian diplomats, secretly warning Catherine against Prussia, consented to use Polish provinces as counters in the game of territorial exchange. Flushed with her own success, however, the Empress despised the bungling Germans. Valmy and its sequel had made a copy of the First Partition more than they could justly claim.

With Catherine, none the less, pique and pride soon yielded to inbred statesmanship. The international situation, moreover, quickly changed. Britain showed signs of returning to the Continent. As a Republic, France threatened to revive her old anti-Russian action, in Sweden, in Turkey and in Poland. Without Kaunitz, Austria showed weakness, thereby impairing the accustomed counterweight to Prussia. To bridle the Poles for ever, Russia might well incorporate their old Russian lands, which would give her fresh resources and recruits, together with a safe road to Moldavia. In 1792, however, she was strong enough to dispense with a tripartite dismemberment and a

laborious equality of shares. Provided that Austria was not aggrandized, Prussia would little heed the distant acquisitions of Russia. The smaller the Republic, the less its prospect of revenge. In the Poland of 1792, Russia and Prussia were omnipotent.

In mid-December, therefore, Catherine resolved to accept Frederick William's demands. Six days sufficed for her minister to dictate the terms of the treaty, which was signed on 23 January 1793. In this, the second treaty of partition, Austria had no share. Forced to buy Prussian assistance against France, and still preferring any provinces to the Polish, she left Russia and Prussia unhampered, in return for a promise of their eventual help to acquire Bavaria. Russia and Prussia, on pretence of checking the Revolution in Poland and of enabling themselves to combat it in France, then proceeded to seize half the population and more than half the area of the Republic, leaving Warsaw the capital of some 80,000 square miles with a population of about 4,000,000. This rump of Poland, moreover, was to be governed by the old constitution without its *liberum veto* and with an elected native on the throne. <sup>1</sup>

So flagrant an abuse of power shocked Austria no less than it shocked the men of Targowica and the King. Francis II changed his ministers, installing the anti-Prussian Thugutt, and Austria showed towards Prussia an ill-will which paralysed the joint campaign against the French. Stanislas vainly sought Catherine's permission to abdicate. With equal ill-success, the confederation successively appealed to her new ambassador, the friendly-sounding Baron Sievers, summoned the gentry to take up arms, and sent Felix Potocki to St Petersburg. Prussian and Russian arms enforced the Partition without the smallest deviation from its terms.

On the morrow of the agreement, the Prussians seized their share. The acquisition of Danzig and Toruń made their hold on the lower Vistula complete, while South Prussia, a vaster province than Silesia, filled up the angle between the Silesian and East Prussian borders. All Great Poland thus passed to the Hohenzollerns, who ruled in Poznań and Gniezno and approached within two dozen miles of Warsaw. Danzig alone resisted, but, ten weeks later, she was starved into surrender (4 April 1793).

On the second anniversary of the Third of May, Stanislas was compelled by Sievers to summon a Diet to Grodno, a town remote from the influence of Prussia or of any power save Russia. There, in June, after the revival of the Permanent Council, some twelve senators and 120 deputies assembled. Many were Russian hirelings,

and none were there to represent the regions occupied. Their duty was to accept partition and a new alliance with Russia. Led by the King, however, they declared that the Confederation of Targowica had been formed to defend the integrity of Poland, and that they could not renounce her provinces. They demanded the withdrawal of the Prussian troops as a preliminary to negotiation with Russia. The hirelings of Russia were not silent, and few deputies were likely to translate opposition into action. About a score of resolute patriots, however, led by the King, forced Sievers and Buchholtz to resort to open violence. By surrounding the debating-hall with troops, arresting the ringleaders and sequestering the revenues of the King and others, Russia and Prussia forced acceptance in mid-August of Catherine's terms. Three million subjects then changed their allegiance, and four-fifths of Russia's western frontier ran due south from the extremity of Courland to the northern confines of Moldavia. Pińsk and Kamieniec were thus lost by Poland, and Wilno palpably imperilled, while on the Galician border Austria acquired an unwelcome neighbour. If the marshes of Polesia covered much of the ceded lands, their southern portion, between the Dnieper and the Dniester, embraced the rich Ukraine.

Having thus capitulated to Russia, the Diet vented its disgust at Prussian treachery by refusing to concede the Prussian share. Fully nine weeks more were spent in recriminations, of which the chief result was to recall Frederick William from the anti-French campaign. Sievers fulfilled his instructions to pose as arbiter between the Prussians and the Diet, his popularity contrasting sharply with the execrations showered on Buchholtz. He gratified the Poles by demanding a Prusso-Polish commercial treaty, and the Prussians by violent measures against the recalcitrant Poles. Finally, in a famous "Dumb Session", the captive Diet ceased its opposition, and on 25 September 1793, the Prussian treaty was signed. Some 1,100,000 Polish subjects passed to the Hohenzollern.

On 14 October a treaty of alliance dictated by Russia made Poland practically her protectorate. Before 24 November, when the Diet ended, all the worst abuses of the 1775 constitution had been restored and declared immutable. The Poles had been treated like cattle, and contemporaries could speak of "the spot which remains Poland". It remained to be seen whether the Polish nation would passively accept this fate.



## CHAPTER VIII

### KOŚCIUSZKO AND THE THIRD PARTITION

THE idea of a national rising against Russia was conceived during the Polish-Russian War of 1792, upon the first symptoms of King Stanislas Augustus' yielding to the Empress Catherine and the Confederation of Targowica. The young commander of the Polish army, Prince Joseph Poniatowski, wrote at that time to his uncle: "If, since this war was not militarily prepared, your Majesty had mounted a horse together with the gentry, armed the townsmen, proclaimed the peasants free—we then should have either perished with honour, or Poland would be now a Power." Upon the news of the King's accession to the Confederation of Targowica, there originated in the residence of the Czartoryskis at Puławy and in the neighbouring Kurów, which were the Polish headquarters, the plan of a *coup d'état*, of bringing the King to the army, and calling the nation to arms in his name. Prince Joseph's loyalty and attachment to his uncle impeded the realization of this plan, when it appeared that it would have needed an act of violence against the King. But the insurrection had been put off, not abandoned; its commander, however, was to be not Poniatowski, in consequence of the growing aversion and contempt for the King, but the republican, Kościuszko.

Lieutenant-General Thaddeus Kościuszko was then forty-six years<sup>FE</sup> old. A descendant of a minor family of the gentry from the Brześć-Lithuanian voyvodeship, a family of White Ruthenian origin, but polonized and Roman Catholic for centuries, he was one of the first pupils of the Warsaw Cadet Corps, of which he became an instructor. As a young officer, he studied in Paris, thanks to pecuniary aid from the King and from Prince Adam Czartoryski. Ever since his youth he had favoured reforming tendencies and the policy of the Czartoryskis, so he remained indifferent to the Confederation of Bar and its five years' struggles. By vocation rather an artist than a soldier, during his stay in France he studied more of the art of war than of painting. After a short sojourn in his country with dramatic personal experiences, he again left for Paris, and thence in 1776 as a volunteer to the United States. There, as an engineer with rank of colonel and esteemed by Washington as "a gentleman of science and of merit", he was at once

used for important fortifications at Billingsport, Ticonderoga, Mount Behmus near Saratoga, West Point, and Charlestown, becoming finally chief engineer of the southern army of General Green, who held him in high regard. After the war he was rewarded by Congress with the rank of brigade-general, the order of Cincinnatus and a large grant of land. He returned to Poland in 1784, already impressed with the idea of the "Natural Rights of Man". Sympathetic to the American negroes, he now felt deeply the hard lot of the Polish peasants. The name "serf", he held, ought to be condemned among civilized nations. He also believed in the unvanquishable strength of a free nation even against the greatest Powers. At first he found no place in the small Polish army. Only when the Four Years' Diet voted an increase to 100,000, could Kościuszko enter its ranks (1789) as a major-general. In Poniatowski's army in the Ukraine he was his first assistant and lieutenant. In the campaign of 1792 he won great recognition from his commander, as well as from the army and the nation at large; legend already caught the echo of his fights, and changed into a victory even a battle he had honourably lost at Dubienka. After the war, with Poniatowski and many prominent generals and officers, he resigned, to escape the command of traitors, for which the creators of the Confederation of Targowica generally passed. He was already "adored" as a "general-philosopher", and as the future leader of the nation his fame spread over Europe. From Paris he received assurances that "his services would be gratefully accepted by the (French) nation", and the Legislative Assembly (on 26 August 1792) bestowed on him the rank of citizen of the new Republic, together with Washington and other great men of different nations.

After repeated announcements of a new Partition, it was decided to send a mission to the French concerning the raising of a national insurrection. This mission was entrusted to Kościuszko. His instructions (January 1793) aimed at securing a diversion by Turkey and Sweden to help the future Polish insurrection and at a French guarantee of Poland's integrity and freedom. If France made peace with Prussia, the entirety of Poland must be assured in the treaty. A general national insurrection was expected, reckoning upon the Polish army (still 65,000 soldiers under arms), upon the sensibility of the enlightened gentry, the patriotism of the townsmen and their sympathy with the French Revolution, and upon the desire for freedom among the peasants. The King was to abdicate in favour of a republic like that of France. Kościuszko's mission was apparently a brilliant success. The plan of a French-Polish descent from the Baltic

coast, with a diversion on the Black Sea, was discussed with him in detail. No doubt far-reaching assurances were given him, since Minister Lebrun in his instructions for Parandier, his agent in Leipzig, declared (on 28 February 1793): "The French Republic is keenly concerned in the great enterprises aiming at the liberation of Poland.... We held several conferences with worthy General Kościuszko and other Polish patriots.... The time is drawing near, when French squadrons of battleships will make their appearance on the Baltic Sea and in the Archipelago simultaneously, and supported by the forces of Sweden and the Turkish Empire, and by the brave Poles, will change the state of things in the North." At the time when these words were written the chances for realizing them were very small, in consequence of a general turn against France in the European situation, and above all because of the outbreak of war with England (1 February 1793).

The atmosphere in Paris was also changed since the end of the preceding year when an ex-deputy to the Four Years' Diet, Turski, nicknamed Sarmata, who appeared at a Council of the Convention (30 December 1792) with a pretended mission, was received with a fraternal kiss and with enthusiastic speeches on the brotherhood of the two Republics. In March came the defeats of Dumouriez and the loss of Belgium; in April the invasion of the Allies, to whom Dumouriez passed over. He communicated to them some data of the January talk with Kościuszko, and these became known to Berlin.

Defeated and forced to defend her own territory, France ceased to be a support for the Poles. The fall of his close friends the Girondists (31 May) made Kościuszko lose ground in Paris. They deluded him, partly deluding themselves, though ready, in case of negotiations with Prussia, to consent silently to a new partition. From the new masters of the situation, Kościuszko met with distinct ill-will. Danton, a realist, opposed to "brissotiade" the principle of "non-interference", of hard political realism and national egoism. Marat paid compliments to Catherine II. Even Robespierre did not wish to incur her disfavour. Kościuszko's far-reaching obligations concerning the democratization of Poland, undertaken in an agreement with Hérault de Séchelles, also remained ineffective. In the summer he returned to Leipzig without any practical achievements.

In the meantime the conspiracy in Poland already aimed at insurrection. The conviction that this was necessary became strengthened by the entrance of a Prussian army into Poland in the second half of August 1793, and the usurpation of the western territories of the

Commonwealth. Vice-brigadier John Henry Dąbrowski then tried to induce the division of Western Poland, retreating before the Prussians, to join forces with the Warsaw garrison; he intended to destroy the Prussian occupation army of Möllendorf, or, in case of failure, to force his way to Danzig. When, however, this plan was thwarted by the Russian occupation forces, the thoughts of the Patriots turned in another direction: that of a general insurrection. The army seemed to be needed not in Danzig or on the Rhine, but in the centre of Poland. In this spirit several men from the army undertook activities in Warsaw; they were: General Ignatius Działyński (in Freemasonry Vice-Grand Master of Western Poland), Colonel of Engineers James Jasiński and Brigadier Anthony Madaliński. Among civilians, the Hungarian banker Kapostas (a prominent member of the association of the "Illuminati") played a leading part, also Elias Aloš (one of the most active workers for Freemasonry in Poland), Stanislas Sołtyk (a deputy to Parliament, very active at the making of the Constitution of the Third of May), Joseph Pawlikowski (a journalist, son of an artisan, later on Kościuszko's secretary), Francis Barss (a barrister and political leader of the citizens of Warsaw) and Charles Prozor (a young Lithuanian magnate). The prominent role of the middle-class element among the civilians is striking. This had been roused into civic consciousness at the time of the Four Years' Diet, and now it was coming into the van of the insurrection, side by side with the army officers. It is beyond doubt that the conspiracy made use of the network of Polish Freemasonry, influential representatives of which were among its initiators.

Their leading idea was to take the Russian and Prussian occupants by surprise with a sudden attack of the Polish army supported by the armed civil population, attracted by the proclamation of personal freedom to the peasants. In face of an inevitable war against the two Powers, the conspirators altogether gave up the idea of a struggle against Austria and of stirring up Galicia, which was almost entirely cleared of Austrian soldiers. This district was only to reinforce the insurrection. During the summer the conspiracy was strongly organized all over the country, and was continuously in contact with the emigration. Trust in France, though shaken among the emigrants, did not weaken among the conspirators at home. Their desperate determination was proof against warnings of an unequal struggle with two great Powers. "They encouraged themselves with the remark that Poland could lose nothing more than what she had already lost" (Zajęczek). Besides, the whole calculation was based upon the fact

of the existence of a strong Polish army. Of this, meanwhile, more than twenty thousand soldiers were lost, as they were rounded up by the Russians within the limits of their new annexation and incorporated by force in the Russian army. Of the still considerable residue (about 37,000 in autumn 1793) at least one half was to be disbanded, on the strength of the resolutions of the Diet.

The prospect of the liquidation of the army hastened action. Pressure was exercised from Warsaw on the emigrants in Dresden and Leipzig, and especially on Kościuszko. He recommended the formation in Warsaw of the so-called "Little Council", a directing organ half military and half civilian, composed of Działyński, Kapostas, Jelski (an ex-deputy to the Four Years' Diet) and 'Walichnowski' (perhaps the pseudonym of Sołtyk). In September Kościuszko arrived at Podgórze near Cracow, to hold a deciding conference. According to a plan elaborated in Warsaw, the Polish army, supported by the citizens of Warsaw and the peasants called "Kurpie", living in the forests nearby, was to surprise the Russian army of occupation and to storm the capital with its well-provided arsenal; at the same time an offensive against the small Prussian forces in Western Poland would be undertaken. The chief forces would turn from Warsaw against the Russians in the district of Lublin and farther towards Volhynia, releasing the Polish regiments which were stationed there. The Polish regiments seized by the Russians and quartered in the Ukraine would force their way to join their countrymen and engage considerable Russian forces. The Lithuanian army would do the same, helped by the insurrection in Poland. The organizers reckoned upon concentrating 15,000 people for action between the Pilica and the Vistula; and upon using 44,000 soldiers in all against 37,000 Russians and Prussians.

The enterprise did not seem hopeless. Kościuszko, however, thought these preparations insufficient. He demanded more definite guarantees of the army's readiness, training of volunteers, munitions, food and renewed propaganda. He regarded as indispensable the reinforcement of the regular army with peasants, induced by the promise of freedom. After having given these orders, Kościuszko retired to Italy, in order to hush suspicion. Thus the outbreak was put off, much to its disadvantage, as diminishing the chance of surprise.

About the end of 1793, the policy of Russia took a turn dangerous to the existence of the remnants of Poland. The conception of maintaining Poland as a buffer state under the protectorate of Russia, represented by the ambassador Sievers, gave way to a tendency towards a

final partition, in which the dignitaries of St Petersburg and the Russian generals were much interested, because after every partition State property and confiscated private estates were distributed.

Sievers was recalled suddenly. General Igelström came as ambassador and applied the method of tyrannizing over and humiliating the King, the Permanent Council and the Poles in general. In Poland, people were ceasing to believe that even the greatest submissiveness would prolong the existence of the State. A certain diminution of tension in the relation of St Petersburg with Warsaw, which followed at the end of January, seemed to be only an adjournment of the catastrophe. At the same time the ambassador strengthened his pressure for the reduction of the army to 15,000; a transitional norm was admitted, 12,000 for Poland proper and 7,700 for Lithuania. The reduction, deferred in consequence of difficulty in paying the dismissed soldiers, was to be put into practice in the first half of March. The soldiers discharged from the service were to be incorporated in Russian regiments, thus excluding the rival recruiting agents. The danger urged to action, but this caused some disclosure.

Imprisonment threatened the leaders. Waiting became more and more dangerous. Emissaries were repeatedly sent to request Kościuszko to begin. When he lingered, the conspirators looked for another leader. At last Kościuszko ordered all preparations to be finished by the middle of March. Cracow was to be the starting-point, and forces as large as possible were to be gathered there. But meanwhile apprehensions proved true: the Warsaw club was broken up by arrests among its members, Kapostas fled from the capital, and Działyński left for Volhynia, where he was taken prisoner by the Russians.

On 12 March Madaliński gathered about 1,000 horse at Ostrołęka, with a handful of volunteer gentry and peasant riflemen. He proclaimed the insurrection and himself the "vice-commander" during the absence of Kościuszko. He did not feel strong enough to attack Warsaw. Demonstrating only in that direction, he decided to force his way to the Cracow district, where Kościuszko was expected.

The news of Madaliński's action put an end to all doubts of the emigration. Upon the news, with that of the suppression of the Warsaw conspiracy, Kościuszko hurried from Dresden to Cracow, where General Wodzicki with his division of South Poland put himself under his orders. On 24 March, in the morning, the act of the insurrection was read in the market-place of Cracow, and afterwards Kościuszko as the "chief commander of the national forces" took his oath of loyalty to the nation.

"The Act of Insurrection of the Citizen-Inhabitants of the Cracow Voyvodship" (drawn up in Dresden by Kościuszko, Kollataj and Ignatius Potocki), referring to the "indisputable right of resistance against tyranny and armed violence", announced a struggle for national freedom, for the territorial integrity and political independence of Poland. Severe upon Catherine II and Frederick William II, it did not touch Austria, as the insurgents reckoned upon her neutrality. In the name of the principle that "the salvation of the nation is the supreme law" it enacted the dictatorial power of Kościuszko, who was to summon a "Supreme National Council" and other authorities of the insurrection. All orders of the Dictator were to bear a temporary character and be in force only during the war, without deciding upon the State structure of the liberated country.

It is difficult to determine the numbers of the Polish army at the outbreak, because its reduction was being effected; there were no doubt some 26,000 to 27,000 soldiers, but scattered all over the country. Besides, about 14,500 soldiers in the Polish regiments incorporated in the Russian army were in the Ukraine. Kościuszko could reckon on gathering at best 5000 to 6000 people in the Cracow district. From the rest he was cut off by the Russians. The Russian forces in Poland amounted to 29,000, the Prussians to 8000, but 30,000 Russians were stationed in the territory of the new partition, and 14,500 Prussians were hastily coming to help their own people. Of course all this did not exhaust the forces, which in the course of the campaign both Powers were able to put into the field against the Polish insurrection.

Still from the very beginning they outnumbered them more than twice. Kościuszko had to use heroic means to oppose force with force. He intended to complete the regular army according to the norm of the year 1792, determined at 100,000. For this purpose he ordered such recruitment as against the Swedes in 1656; one foot-soldier for every five houses (and one mounted soldier for fifty houses) with shoes, peasant clothes and arms. Besides, numerous volunteers from all classes of society took up arms, and volunteer detachments were formed. According to Kościuszko "it was difficult in these circumstances to muster 100,000 soldiers of the line, but to put into the field a mass of 300,000 would be easy". He had American and French models before his eyes; militias, national guards, "*levée en masse*". In his militia there enlisted recruits not comprised in the ranks of the regular army, besides, upon special order, all men aged 18-28. All men between 18-40 years of age beyond the categories mentioned above were to form a mass levy, summoned only for local defence.

Such masses could not possibly be provided with military fire-arms. These were to be replaced by shot-guns. Above all, however, Kościuszko reckoned upon side-arms. He was acquainted with theories of Folard and Lloyd, rehabilitating the pike or the bayonet, the deep formation, the massed attack. From the recent events of the revolutionary war in France he also carried away the conviction of the decisive role of resolute bayonet attacks. Therefore he counted upon using masses of people armed with pikes, or rather with scythes fixed vertically, for massed attack, under the protection of select detachments of riflemen as skirmishers, and of gunfire. Upon this belief in the possibility of using for battle purposes masses of people recently called to arms, and upon the belief in the prevalence of side-arms, did the insurrection found the hope of victory.

Events soon seemed to confirm this belief. On 4 April, Kościuszko fought his first battle with the Russians at Racławice near Cracow. He had about 4000 regulars and not quite 2000 armed peasants. The Russian general, Denisov, had almost 7000, but he divided his forces and manœuvred in such a way that with one half of his men he was far from the field of battle, while the other half under the command of General Tormasov fought against Kościuszko the whole day long. Although weaker in numbers the Russians, trusting to their skill and experience, attacked Kościuszko on two sides; at a critical moment for the Poles Tormasov's attack was making progress, and in the distance Denisov appeared. But Kościuszko counter-attacked, leading a column of 320 peasants armed with scythes against the Russian battery, while the regular infantry started bayonet attacks on either flank. The Russians were taken by surprise with this manner of fighting, unknown to them. They were broken in their centre, where the peasants took eleven guns; afterwards the second Russian column which encircled Kościuszko on one side was completely destroyed; when Denisov saw that Tormasov was defeated, he retreated without fighting. For the first time the scythe-bearers made their appearance in a manner which, as it seemed, surpassed all expectations. Above all Kościuszko himself showed in this battle excellent presence of mind, strategic skill and capacity for rapid action. Kościuszko now put on the white cloak of the Cracow peasants, the garment of his scythe-bearers, and it is thus that he lives in the memory of the Polish nation.

Racławice changed the insurrection from a local enterprise into a general national uprising and gained the support of the whole Polish army. The echo of the battle evoked in Warsaw an enthusiasm among the soldiers and the civil population which was manifested in a



revolutionary outbreak on 17 and 18 April. The Warsaw conspiracy, crushed at the beginning of March, was restored at the end of the same month by a young lawyer, Thomas Maruszewski, the son of a townsman. John Kiliński, a shoemaker, popular among the townsmen, showed great energy. Some of the patriots from the time of the Four Years' Diet, such as Wybicki, ex-deputy, and Zakrzewski, ex-president of Warsaw, were won over at the last moment. As moderates, they deprived the conspiracy in the capital of an extreme Jacobin character, and made it broadly national. The "Civil and Military Council" was founded as its directing organ.

The Russian garrison in Warsaw, after many had been sent in pursuit of Madaliński, numbered about 7500 fighters, with 1650 Prussians near by, while the Polish garrison had about 3500 soldiers. The disproportion was to be balanced by an uprising of the population. Warsaw, a town of 100,000 inhabitants, for two years had been flooded with newcomers ejected from their homes by the war or deprived of normal means of living. There was in the town a boisterous mass of artisans, many independent workmen, and a large element of minor gentry, poor but exuberant. The town was crowded with discharged soldiers. Economic ruin contributed to a revolutionary atmosphere. When Kiliński declared that a Russian action was to take place on Holy Saturday at the moment of the Resurrection Service, the Poles decided to strike on 17 April (Holy Thursday) at daybreak.

The plan of anticipating the Russians did not turn out a perfect success; an unrelenting fight of two days arose, with the Russians for the arsenal, and with the Prussians for the powder magazine, while the insurgents also attacked the embassy, where Igelström had several battalions, and they tried to destroy the Russian detachments which had been cut off. The Russians, on the other hand, tried to set the embassy free, and attacked the arsenal. The townsfolk, numbering some 10,000 fighters, by rifle fire from windows and roofs caused heavy losses to the Russians and demoralized their soldiers, while swarms of insurgents resolutely attacked Russian detachments and buildings occupied by them. On the second day, Igelström with a handful of his soldiers succeeded in forcing his way to the Prussians, while part of the Russian garrison retreated in the opposite direction. More than 3000 survived, but at least 4400 were killed or made prisoners. The insurgents took 28 pieces of cannon. They lost about 1000 soldiers, killed or wounded, and perhaps about 2000 civilians. This was the greatest Polish victory in that war and in the whole century.

The "Civil and Military Council" constituted no Government.

The King at first tried to mitigate the strife, but in vain. He was not even able to gather round his person a part of the army. But he succeeded in taking advantage of the lack of a revolutionary government. Upon his order, his people promoted to the post of the president of Warsaw Ignatius Zakrzewski, who was immensely popular, "a friend of mankind", but also a friend of the King. The crowd proclaimed him with enthusiasm, and beside him another candidate of the King, General Mokronowski, young and valiant but up till that time indifferent to the insurrection. The leaders of the conspiracy found themselves in an insignificant minority; the bravest did not become members of the Council. Thus, in the capital, which of course became the chief centre of the insurrection, power got out of the hands of its creators, and the King, whom they wished to dethrone, obtained influence. Thenceforward a sharp political struggle was carried on in Warsaw, between the Jacobin party and that of the King.

Almost simultaneously with the outbreak of insurrection in Warsaw, there began an insurrection in Lithuania, quickly involving the army. In the night of 22-23 April, Colonel James Jasiński with 300 conspirators from the army, got control of Wilno by sudden action, taking prisoner the Russian commander Arseniev with 1000 of his men, almost the whole garrison. As a convinced Jacobin, Jasiński gave a sharp revolutionary course to the Lithuanian insurrection, one token of which, among others, was that the Lithuanian Great Hetman, Simon Kossakowski, was hanged for treason. The Poles soon became masters of the country as far as the new Russian border, which they crossed, forcing their way into Courland (and capturing Libau), to Livonia at Dünaбург and into the former Mińsk voyvodship. Even before Warsaw was set free, the Polish troops quartered in the Lublin voyvodship, in the Chełm country and in Volhynia, had joined the insurrection under the leadership of Lieutenant-colonel Grochowski. Here on the river Bug, sheltered from the east, the insurgents became about 7000 strong.

About the end of April the Polish detachments in the army of the Empress rebelled. Polish regiments and brigades started from the Kiev and Bracław Ukraine. Three brigades of cavalry forced their way, one through Volhynia to join Grochowski, two others to the border of Galicia and through the Austrian territory to the voyvodship of Lublin. Some regiments were slaughtered or taken prisoners by the Russians; others were disarmed beforehand. The prisoners in masses were sentenced to the knout, the gallows or the wheel, but Catherine II contented herself with sending the majority to lifelong military service

in the Caucasus. Those who forced their way to the standards of Kościuszko may be estimated at 4000 men, the total number of old soldiers at 30,000, not counting the fresh recruits, volunteers and militia.

At the end of April the insurrection controlled almost the whole Commonwealth within the boundaries left to it by the second partition; it also had a maximum chance of victory, in consequence of the adversary's great weakness and the moral shock which he had experienced. This shock was also strongly felt in St Petersburg, where serious fears for Poland were entertained. In the first weeks of May Kościuszko continued active in organizing but avoided further battles for his small army. He therefore let himself be kept in check in the Cracow province, and at last was pressed with his back to the Vistula at Połaniec by the Russian corps of Denisov. A watchful (Austrian) observer, General Harnoncourt, wrote: "At the beginning Kościuszko near Cracow almost did miracles with nothing, enthusiasm became general, revolutions followed one after another most successfully; now, when powerful strokes ought to be inflicted, everything goes by bits and scraps, there is lack of continuity in action."

The insurrection was politically isolated. Polish diplomatic negotiations in Paris, revived energetically at the beginning of the year upon some encouragement from Desforgues, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and conducted by Barss, who had been sent to Paris, at first gave hope of pecuniary subsidies. But this hope failed. After the outbreak came the answer: "No subsidies. The armed republicans dispose of all the resources of their country." And the Turks, favourably disposed as they were to Poland and Kościuszko, waited to see what France herself would do.

Of course it would have been still more convenient to France if the Polish insurrection had turned against Austria. But Kościuszko wished to avoid a war with Austria. At the moment of the outbreak he gave orders to respect the Austrian borders, devised proper securities for the border authorities, and tried to open negotiations with Vienna (through Ossoliński and Sołtyk). There was even a meeting between Ignatius Potocki and Count Gallenberg, vice-governor of Galicia, at which the Polish diplomatist not only endeavoured to dissipate all suspicions concerning the Jacobin character of the insurrection, but even tried to appeal to Austria's expansionist appetite by suggesting that a part of the country might be turned over to Austria by way of security till the moment when Poland's fate should be decided. There was even an idea of offering Austria the throne of Poland.

All this sprang from the illusion of Austria's benevolence, caused by her absence from the second partition. Although Austria looked more and more inimically at Prussia's rapacity in Poland, nevertheless she threw out hints to Catherine II concerning equivalent acquisitions at the expense of Poland, and under the pretext of protecting Poland, made tentative suggestions at St Petersburg about garrisoning Cracow and other points in Poland with Austrian soldiers. She now was the Power which most fervently urged on a new partition. Upon the news of the outbreak of the insurrection, Vienna assumed a hostile attitude. For the time being all available forces, amounting to several battalions, were collected for the eventual capture of Cracow, for which Russia's consent had been already obtained; Austria only waited till the town should be surrendered by the Poles themselves.

Kościuszko, looking in vain for help from outside, and terrified by the attitude of France, undertook about the end of April a desperate attempt to avert or to delay the Prussian danger by negotiations. He authorized the President of Warsaw, Zakrzewski, to negotiate with Buchholtz, the Prussian mandatory minister who was still in Warsaw. The assurance was offered that if Prussia would leave in peace the boundaries of Poland (of course those of the second partition), the Poles would not touch the Prussian border, and that the war had been proclaimed only "for the sake of policy". This insinuation was apparently well received by the King, who hinted at Prussian mediation in Poland. Of course it was convenient for him also to have peace in the Polish territories which he had recently annexed, until he could gather forces enough for the great war to which he was invited by the Russian Empress. Polish diplomatic activities, inefficient in relation to France and her friends, were a fatal illusion in relation to Austria and Prussia, and disastrous for the moral attitude of the struggling nation.

Kościuszko worked hard on the moral mobilization of the nation. He aimed at rousing the serfs to fight for the country. To do this without evoking a hostile reaction of the gentry, he had to avoid radical settlements in the burning matter of the feudal relations between peasantry and landlords. Still, in his famous manifesto proclaimed at Połaniec (7 May) in collaboration with Koliątaj, he made an important step towards a settlement of this matter, while he granted personal freedom to the peasants, assured them of Government protection, secured to them ownership of land and reduced their dues in the way of serf labour by one-half. The Kościuszko reform went further than the Josephinian reform in Galicia, and even further

than the later one of Napoleon in the Duchy of Warsaw. He did not succeed in rousing the whole of the peasant mass, but he drew from it thousands of determined and self-sacrificing fighters for Poland; his name reached the outlying regions of the former commonwealth; long years afterwards the far-off White Ruthenian folk sang songs in his praise. There was much unfriendly reserve and hesitation on the part of the gentry, but a far greater portion of the class, full of a spirit of sacrifice, took part in the insurrection, and only an insignificant handful betrayed the national cause.

At last, at the beginning of May, Kołłątaj arrived and later on Ignatius Potocki, eagerly awaited by Kościuszko. He sent them to assume power in Warsaw, where the Jacobin Clubs with the participation of the chief leaders of the April uprising, were taking violent action against the King and the Temporary Representative Council. On 8 May, the King when driving to Praga (near Warsaw) was stopped by agitated crowds and returned to the castle almost as Louis XVI had done from Varennes. Ankiewicz, the chairman of the Permanent Council, both Hetmans Ożarowski and Zabiełło and Bishop Kossakowski, all accused of treason on behalf of Russia, were sentenced by martial law and put to death. Further attacks on the person of the King were in prospect. The arrival of Potocki and Kołłątaj (24 May) and the constituting (by a decree on 21 May) of the Supreme National Council, composed of eight members and thirty-six substitutes, did not remove the ferment. The King very skilfully saved himself and his throne. On 6 May he sent a letter to Kościuszko, which implied his subordination to the leader on condition of maintenance of the Catholic religion and preservation of the law of ownership. He received a dry answer with a merciless reproach that public confidence in him had been weakened since "the rebellion of Targowica", but opening for him the way to rescue the crown through greater constancy and loyal collaboration with the Council. Thus (according to the wish of Kościuszko) the King was to be tolerated conditionally, but he still felt threatened. During riots on 28 June, accompanied by new acts of terror, he was again in danger. At last, with Kościuszko's arrival near Warsaw, disturbances in the capital were stopped and the whole energy of the people directed towards the defence of the town. The King tried to be useful and to win the favour of public opinion; his nephew, Prince Joseph, who had arrived from abroad, enlisted under Kościuszko's orders, and fought, both for Poland, for the rehabilitation of the name of the Poniatowskis, and for the safety of his uncle. Thus, if there was in insurrectionary Poland a contest between

the parties, it was not such as to disable the country in its struggle against the partitioning Powers by a civil war.

The insurrection demanded huge sacrifices in blood and property. It drew out of the nation such a number of fighters as the Commonwealth had never commanded before. The army with detachments of volunteers and partisans reached three times its former strength, and altogether more than 90,000 men were in its ranks. The town militias and the mass levies in the field, on a moderate estimate, amounted to 55,000, and the total military force of the insurrection to 140,000–150,000 fighters, of whom 70,000–80,000 were under arms together. These calculations, made by T. Korzon, are confirmed from sources unknown to him and made accessible recently. Thus it may be said that one-half of Kościuszko's programme of putting into the field 300,000 men was realized, which testifies to a mighty dynamic power of insurrection and to great vitality in the nation.

In Poland of that time it was easier to find soldiers than money for their armament and maintenance. Poland's economic and financial feebleness had foiled her military efforts at the time of the Four Years' Diet. Although the armament of a large part of his army was limited to scythes and pikes, nevertheless the material burdens which fell to the share of the population were very heavy, the more so as a considerable part of the country was exploited by the enemy. It is impossible to calculate the contributions made in kind, horses for riding and draught, clothing, equipment, food for soldiers and horses. Of pecuniary means, the insurrection had at its disposal only the scanty money reserves of the confiscated public treasury offices. The country was in ruin, of which a recent collapse of banking firms was a proof. The insurrectionary government began everywhere to collect taxes, raising considerably the assessment of the time of the Four Years' Diet. Some taxes were collected for three years in advance. In Warsaw a new progressive tax, levied on rents, was introduced (lodging tax), also a sort of tax on industries and an income tax on salaries. The holders, royal, private and ecclesiastical, of property in land became also considerably burdened, steep progression being applied. While doing this, the authorities very decidedly opposed transferring the taxes imposed on landed property to the shoulders of the peasants. The collection of these taxes proceeded with great difficulty, and they did not produce the full result expected. Other sources of income were monopolies and lotteries; attempts were even made to sell State property. Free gifts were collected and a public loan was tried; sums deposited in banks were confiscated as a compulsory

loan. Following the example of the French assignats, Treasury notes were issued which were based on national property and had a fixed rate of exchange (the discount on it, after several weeks, reaching 30 per cent.). Finally, Treasury certificates were in use. Of course the insurrectionary government was on the way to an inflation of paper money. However, it was neither the lack of money, nor the difficulties in maintaining the army, that led the insurrection to disaster.

As mentioned above, about the end of April the great war operations were interrupted. Kościuszko secured Cracow with a scanty garrison and protected it with large troops of militia and mass levy. He himself, with little more than 6000 soldiers and several thousands of peasant militia, moved along the border down the Vistula, calling Grochowski from Chełm, in order to attack Denisov on two sides and to crush him. In the meantime, however, the Prussian army appeared. On 11 May Lieutenant-General Favrat with 11,000 men entered the Cracow voyvodeship and at Skala, on 18 May, attacked and drove out of a shielding position a detachment of mass levy. On 3 June the Prussian king arrived at Szczekociny, took command and established connection with Denisov. While Kościuszko was approaching with 14,000 men and 24 guns, the united Russo-Prussian army rose to 26,000-27,000 men with 124 guns. The Allies were superior also in equipment and training; more than one-third of the Polish army consisted of new soldiers who were for the most part scythe-bearers.

In such circumstances on 6 June a pitched battle took place at Rawka, a village not far from Szczekociny. Why Kościuszko risked this battle is not clear. He is supposed to have disbelieved to the last moment in action by the Prussians. In spite of desperate counter-attacks of the Poles, victory was bound to be on the side of the Allies. The Poles suffered heavy losses in man-power; Wodzicki and Grochowski were killed, Kościuszko himself, who about the end of the battle apparently sought death, was slightly wounded. The Allies took some prisoners and guns. The Poles, ineffectively pursued, retired in the direction of Warsaw by way of Kielce.

An inevitable consequence of this battle was the loss of Cracow. Kościuszko's order to surrender the town, in case of extreme necessity, into the hands of the Austrians, was not fulfilled only through the fault of the Austrians themselves, who awaited orders from Vienna, which came too late. By a strange irony of fate, Kościuszko's intention of surrendering Cracow to the Austrians met the wishes of Catherine II.

The Prussians entered Cracow (15 June) for a prolonged sojourn. On this occasion the insignia of the Polish crown were taken by them and lost for ever.

Simultaneously with the defeat at Szczekociny, another failure happened, between the rivers Vistula and Bug. About the end of May, on the Polish side 6000-7000 men had gathered, but the Russian forces under General Derfelden exceeded 16,000. In a fierce encounter on 6 June, the Poles were forced to retire, though almost without loss in prisoners or guns. Zajączek, however, continued to retreat till he had crossed the Vistula, and the scythe-bearers of Lublin, recently mobilized for help, were dispersed. "After these defeats the spirit of the army became gloomy." In fact, the situation would have been dangerous, had Derfelden set off down the Vistula towards Warsaw. But this general had orders to recross the Bug after destroying Puławy, the residence of the Czartoryskis, and to set off for Lithuania, the subjection of which was the next strategic task of the Russians.

Kościuszko retreated towards Warsaw, drawing Zajączek to himself. The Prussian king crossed the Vistula at Inowłódz as late as 30 June. On 13 July, the army of the Allies, which had risen to 25,000 Prussians and 13,000-14,000 Russians, altogether 38,000-39,000 fighters, arrived near Warsaw, in the vast entrenchments of which Kościuszko gathered about 28,000 men ready to fight, not counting 9000 of the Warsaw militia. Warsaw presented at that moment a bridge-head over which prolonged trench fighting went on. Farther to the right, war operations began along the line of the river Narew, which a Prussian army-corps of 11,000 men tried to force, in order to reach the rear ranks of Kościuszko's army. The Polish shielding forces on the river Narew, much weaker and composed for the most part of insurrectional formations and of the mass levy troops, fulfilled their task very efficiently.

The activities of the Allies round Warsaw were conducted languidly. The Russian corps behaved quite passively, as if it did not want to contribute to the capture of Warsaw by the Prussian king. The Prussians themselves took energetic action only at the end of August. At first (26 August) they got the upper hand over the right Polish wing commanded by Poniatowski, but in the following days their pressure was broken (a failure on 28 August, a Polish counter-attack on 31 August). Meanwhile the Prussians were alarmed by the news of an armed rising which had broken out in Western Poland, in the rear of their army, and of the interception of their transport of ammunition at Włocławek. Already on 29 August the first Prussian



troops left the camp near Warsaw for Western Poland; on 6 September, the king with the rest of the army departed beyond the line of the rivers Bzura, Rawka and Pilica. The Russians, the command of whom was taken over from Denisov by General Fersen, parting company with the Prussians, went off southwards over the Pilica, up the Vistula, in order to seek for a suitable crossing and to extricate themselves eastward, towards the Bug. General Dąbrowski with 3000 men followed the Prussians, having the task of supporting the insurrection in Western Poland. He succeeded in skilfully evading the Prussian forces, entered Western Poland, drew to himself the local insurrectionary troops, and by minor operations kept a considerable part of the Prussian army engaged for several weeks.

Meanwhile the campaign in Lithuania developed seriously in July, when the Russian general Knöring, having evaded the main forces of General Wielhorski, who was in command after Jasiński, tried to take Wilno by surprise (19 July). He was repelled, thanks to the bravery of a handful of soldiers and townsmen. In August the Russians renewed the offensive against Wilno with much larger forces, when the Lithuanian army was too much dispersed; on 11 August General Chlewiński left the town, defeated. There followed a moral breakdown among the government authorities, and the army, which was melting away, withdrew to Grodno. Thus the Lithuanian insurrection was dying out, but the fear of a new outbreak detained a great part of the Russian forces.

The general situation in the first part of September was not hopeless for the insurrection. In spite of great losses, especially in the Lithuanian army, there were still 60,000 Polish soldiers under arms. The superiority of the enemy was enormous; more than 50,000 Prussians, at least 50,000 Russians, and some 4000 to 5000 Austrians took active part in the operations at that time. However, these large forces (at least 105,000 altogether) were dispersed, disabled by the fear of revolts, while engaged in holding the occupied areas. Mutual animosities among the Allies, each intent only on his own aims, burst out violently. Catherine II sneered at the Prussian king without mincing her words; the Prussians again quite justly blamed the Russians for their inactivity at Warsaw; the Austrians were angry with the Prussians for taking Cracow. Collaboration passed into distrustful mutual observation. There arose the prospect of a prolongation of the war until the spring of the next year.

The situation changed in consequence of the action of the general in chief, Count Alexander Suvorov Rymniksky, who in the wars against

Poland and Turkey had become famous for unusual offensive energy and perseverance. Suvorov set off with several thousand men from the South Ukraine through Volhynia in the direction of Brześć, drawing to himself on his way also other troops, till his army corps amounted to 12,000–13,000 men. His task was to secure the left flank of Repnin's army operating in Lithuania by taking up a strong position at Brześć and its vicinity, and by the establishment of shielding positions on the River Bug up to the Austrian frontier. At Krupczyce he met (17 September) a Polish shielding corps of General Sierakowski, 5000 to 6000 first-rate soldiers. In a difficult struggle, the Poles made a good resistance and retreated in good order to Brześć, without losses in guns or prisoners; but two days afterwards at Terespol, Sierakowski allowed the adversary to take him by surprise in his further retreat and to destroy his corps, although, according to the adversary's testimony, individual troops fought with desperate perseverance, hardly anybody asked for pardon, and one of the Polish columns fell in rows as it stood.

Kościuszko did not lose heart. He hastily reconstituted the corps of Sierakowski. He ordered Mokronowski, who commanded the Lithuanian forces, to manœuvre on Suvorov's flank and in his rear, while he himself planned to attack him with Sierakowski's corps. He personally visited both these corps to prepare a counter-offensive. Meanwhile Suvorov's driving power was exhausted; he had suffered great losses and must secure his rear; from Brześć he could set off with only 6000 men. Once again it appeared that the campaign of 1794 would be finished without a decision, when the news came to Warsaw that Fersen had forced a crossing of the Vistula near Koźienice. Fersen intended to make his way to the Lublin voyvodeship where he had orders to establish himself firmly and enter into contact with Suvorov. Kościuszko guessed that a fusion of both these Russian army-corps must lead to a decisive Russian offensive towards Warsaw; therefore, upon the news that Fersen had forced the Vistula, he decided to attack him, if possible at the crossing. For this reason he hurried to Sierakowski's corps, at the same time sending him further reinforcements from Warsaw, and led this corps personally against Fersen, whom he found at the crossing with his back to the Vistula, the bridge over which he had already removed. This excellent strategic manœuvre of Kościuszko's might have led to brilliant success, had the Polish forces been sufficient; but the Polish leader was always inclined to depreciate the factor of numbers in war, and to over-estimate moral factors. Too late did he call up General Poniński with

his corps (about 4000 men), then distant a good day's march. In consequence, on 9 October at Maciejowice, 7000 Polish soldiers opposed 12,000 to 14,000 of Fersen's men. Next day Fersen attacked Kościuszko's position, bringing about a complete encirclement of the Poles. A fierce battle lasted for eight hours; Fersen used in it all his forces, to the last battalion, squadron and company. It ended in a total destruction of Kościuszko's small army. He himself, gravely wounded, was taken prisoner. Poniński found himself near the field when he could rescue only some scattered remnants of Kościuszko's army; he retreated towards Warsaw unpursued.

Kościuszko never uttered the words *Finis Poloniae* ascribed to him, but Maciejowice decided the fate of the insurrection, and thereby of the Commonwealth. On the first news Suvorov gave dispositions for a general offensive against Warsaw; he ordered Fersen to go in the direction of Mińsk Mazowiecki, he himself marched to join him from the side of Brześć; on his own responsibility, he gave orders to Derfelden to take the offensive, appointing Praga near Warsaw as their point of convergence. The Poles could not make up for the disaster of Maciejowice by a new effort, when Kościuszko was not there. His successor as the chief commander of the national forces, the brave Lithuanian artisan, Thomas Wawrzecki, could not prevent the moral decay of the insurrection. The King's party, and with it a part of the army, thought only of the conditions of capitulation; the Jacobin party, or the "Hugonists" with Kołłątaj (called so after his Christian name), with Generals Zajączek and Jasiński at its head, sought refuge in a revolutionary dictatorship and terrorism; all were in despair. The leadership of the army became weaker and weaker; defeats were ever more numerous. At last, on 4 November, the united Russian forces under Suvorov took by storm the entrenched camp of Praga, on the right bank of the Vistula, opposite Warsaw, and afterwards slaughtered not only the defenders of the town but also its defenceless population. Among those who fell with arms in their hands was the brave warrior, poet and fervent Jacobin, General Jasiński. Warsaw, terror-stricken, put its fate into the hands of the King, who obtained from the victor mercy for the capital and its inhabitants. The Polish army left Warsaw, but in a state of growing decay. On 18 November the Russians captured without any struggle at Radoszyce in the Kielce vovvodship its Commander, Wawrzecki, with a handful of generals, officers and soldiers. Kościuszko, Wawrzecki, Ignatius Potocki, Zakrzewski, Kapostas, Kiliński, the poet Niemcewicz (Kościuszko's secretary), and several others were deported to St Petersburg as prisoners of

State. Kołłataj and General Zajączek took refuge across the Austrian border, where they also were imprisoned. The King remained a prisoner in Warsaw, which was occupied by Suvorov. He appealed to the Empress in a letter with a request for mercy for "the nation which would soon cease to exist if her orders and magnanimity would not come to its assistance".

But it was vain to appeal to the magnanimity of the Empress. A final partition of Poland had been already decided, when Catherine II invited the Prussian king to join in armed intervention (about 10 April) and at the same time assured to Austria full equality of footing in deciding upon the future fate of Poland. In July Catherine II informed Vienna that "the moment had arrived when the three neighbouring Courts ought to occupy themselves not only with extinguishing, to its smallest spark, the fire which had burst out in their neighbourhood, but also to prevent once for all time the possibility of its flaring up anew from the ashes". Negotiations began. The Austrians at once moved as a "*conditio sine qua non*" that Cracow should be surrendered to them, to which the Russians justly replied that they had only themselves to blame for letting in the Prussians. After initial talks Thugutt formulated in September the demands of his Court. He demanded Cracow, the country on the left bank of the Vistula up to the river Pilica, and on the right bank up to the river Narew and further, in a straight line, towards the Russian frontier of the second partition in Lithuania, and as far as this frontier up to its junction with the frontier of Galicia. Thus, Austria claimed not only Cracow, Sandomierz and Lublin, but also Brześć, Białystok, Nowogródek, Pińsk, Łuck and Dubno. At the same time she violently protested against any considerable territorial increase of Prussia. The Empress treated harshly both the principles laid down in Thugutt's argument and his excessive territorial claims, threatening even a new bilateral pact with Prussia with the omission of Austria. St Petersburg demanded Austria's consent to the River Bug as the boundary in the East and North, which meant that only one half of the territory claimed would be granted to her. When Praga fell, all Austrian scruples and doubts fell with it. There began in St Petersburg conferences of the mandatories of the three Powers, which had been broken off because of Prussia's appetite for the whole voyvodships of Cracow and Sandomierz up to the Vistula. On 3 January 1795, an Austro-Russian convention was concluded, in which both these Powers divided Poland without regard to Prussia's claims. As a war with Prussia and the Porte was expected to break out

in consequence of this division, both Powers concluded at the same time also a secret convention of alliance.

By the January convention Russia assigned to herself the provinces of the Commonwealth up to the Galician border, further on up to the river Bug as far as Brześć, from there up to a straight line drawn in the direction of Grodno towards the River Niemen and farther on along that river as far as the Prussian boundary. Austria was to obtain the territories limited by the Prussian boundary in the Cracow voyvodeship, the Pilica up to the mouth of this river, the Vistula as far as the estuary of the Narew, and the Bug up to the Galician boundary. The next point was to enforce the accession of Prussia, which held the town of Cracow with a considerable part of the Cracow and Sandomierz voyvodeships. On the other hand Russia held Warsaw by way of security. There were great difficulties in reaching a mutual understanding, and the conflict became sharpened by Prussia leaving the coalition. Already in October 1794, upon the news of the defeat at Maciejowice, the Prussian king had decided to make peace with France in order to be able to support his claims in Poland with the whole of his forces; at the end of November, after the insurrection had failed, negotiations at Basle were started; about the end of March 1795, the king, expecting a war over Poland with the other partitioning powers, hastened to strike a bargain, which had been delayed by Hardenberg, who was unfavourably disposed towards it. At last, in the night of 5-6 April, the treaty of Basle was concluded, and the Prussian army was able to set off from Westphalia for Poland. The possibility of a war was seriously taken into account in St Petersburg and Vienna, as well as the eventuality that in the struggle with Prussia it would prove necessary to re-establish some sort of a mutilated Poland with the Vistula as its eastern boundary.

However, the risk of such a war was too great for both sides. All ended in Catherine calling "fat William" some bad names. About the middle of August, the Prussian king consented to renew the negotiations concerning his accession to the January convention. Austria agreed to make certain concessions; she was ready to give back a piece of land in the fork of the rivers Vistula, Narew and Bug opposite Warsaw, demanding in return 40,000 Prussian reinforcements on the Rhine. This claim was not supported by Catherine, who was anxious to bring Polish matters to a close. She enforced upon the Austrians some territorial concessions in the borderland of Silesia, the delimitation being subjected to her arbitrament. Thus, on 24 October 1795, a Russo-Prussian convention was concluded which

meant an end of the conflict and the accession of Prussia to the treaty of partition. The bargain of delimitation was not finished until a year afterwards; the Act of Delimitation was drawn up on 5 December 1796; on 26 January 1797, after the death of Catherine, the convention concerning a definitive partition of Poland was concluded. This convention stated that a complete, final and irrevocable partition had been accomplished, and besides, that "everything that might secure the three Powers in a real, actual and unchangeable possession of the provinces which they had annexed, was confirmed by the perfect harmony which reigned among them, and became still more strengthened by the renunciation and abdication of His Majesty King Stanislas Augustus". In fact the unhappy King, imprisoned at Grodno by order of the Empress, had already on 25 November 1795 signed an act, in which he acknowledged that the decisions of the Empress and of other neighbouring Powers were "solely able to secure peace and quietness for our fellow-citizens".

To assure this "quietness", preventive steps were taken in order to deprive the nation, captured and torn asunder, of an inner bond, that of the memory of a common past and a common name. It was not without a certain mutual distrust that the Powers bound themselves by an important "article, separate and secret" which asserted "the recognized necessity of abolishing everything which might recall the existence of a Polish kingdom in face of the performed annihilation of this political body". With this purpose it was decided "never to introduce into their titles the name or the joint description 'the Kingdom of Poland', which would be abolished since that moment for ever".

In this spirit a new rule began in the territories of the former Commonwealth, devastated by war, visited by slaughter, fire and plunder. Seeking refuge from persecution, the men of the insurrection, who were the active *élite* of the nation, went into exile in crowds. Officers and soldiers escaped captivity and compulsory service in the armies of the usurpers. After the foreign armies, crowds of alien officials were now flowing in. State property and estates, of which the Polish patriots had been deprived, passed into the hands of foreign donatories. Old institutions and old names disappeared. In the country annexed by Russia, the borders of administrative districts were drawn anew and often redrawn, and their capitals were often shifted from one town to another. For the southern provinces a common name of "Red Russian" provinces was thought out. Prussia added new names to the already existing name of Southern Prussia, to which

now Warsaw belonged; that of New East Prussia (the regencies of Płock and Białystok) and of New Silesia (a scrap of the Cracow voyvodeship). Austria called her new "hereditary country" by a name perhaps beautiful, but neither historically nor geographically justified; "Western Galicia". This country, which had absolutely nothing in common with any "Galician" past, lay northwards from the Galicia of the year 1772. Having thus changed the boundary lines, the partitioning Powers at once settled the necessary changes of inscriptions, assuring their new subjects in gracious proclamations that this had happened "for all time".

This robbery, "brigandage" as the whole matter was called in plain terms by old Prince Henry of Prussia, was accomplished without any opposition from other European countries. France made no protest. According to a Paris ministerial record, "the Committee of Public Safety" in its negotiations with Prussia prudently kept absolute silence about the Polish cause. The fear of Russia's active interference with the Coalition War inclined France to continued reticence. Considerations of the alliance with Austria and Russia, and the desire of winning active Russian help, determined the attitude of England. And the indifference of the Western Powers, disabled by persistent struggles among themselves and guided by the immediate necessities of these struggles, determined the attitude of Europe, which became one of reconciliation with the accomplished fact of the annihilation of Poland.







## CHAPTER IX

### A. POLISH LITERATURE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE history of Polish literature in the eighteenth century, like Poland's political history, may be divided into two distinct parts. The first part, coinciding approximately with the reign of the two kings of the Saxon House, is the period of the greatest deterioration in letters, just as in political life. The second part, in political history so very complicated, showing such a display of positive and negative elements, is in literature definitely a period of rebirth to which the whole subsequent culture of Poland is greatly indebted.

The "Saxon Times" were times of decay, not only in as much as they produced no talent of high standing, but since even a second-rate cultural literature was hardly to be found then. The nobility (which was still the only class producing writers), living in complete contentment with its own material welfare and its institutions, had lost all artistic taste as well as the appreciation for higher intellectual issues and interest in what was going on in the world at large. School instruction, mostly in the hands of the Jesuits, gave a good knowledge of Latin; hence the profusion of Latin odes and even epic poems which, however, are artistically lifeless. The literary output in Polish was still more considerable, but unfortunately its quality is far from being equal to its quantity. A large part of this production consists of panegyric poems composed with all the mannerisms of baroque rhetoric which had already become excessive in the seventeenth century, but now reached the limits of extravagance. Religious poetry forms another large group. One of its examples is a full-length versified paraphrase of the Old and New Testaments produced (in 25,000 lines) by King Stanislas Leszczyński. As a particularly representative work we may mention *Thoughts on Death Unavoidable* (published 1766), ascribed to a Wilno Jesuit, Joseph Baka: a poem proclaiming the maxim of *memento mori* in a kind of Skeltonian verse most facetious and coarse.

It is only infrequently that we meet with noble exceptions, as, for example, in the anonymous *Various Thoughts on Things Ultimate* (published 1766, together with the work of Baka), a collection of poems

which in their genuine mystic and ascetic character give evidence that this profuse religious literature was not necessarily based on formal devotion, but sometimes sprang from deep recesses of the soul. Genuine religious spirit found its expression also—in the first years of the reign of Stanislas Augustus—in the abundant anonymous poetry of the Bar Confederates. This poetry, like the political movement itself from which it originated, displays all the best feelings of the old Polish gentry: not religious zeal alone, but ardent patriotism and love of freedom, tainted, unfortunately, with the spirit of fanaticism and exclusiveness.

The outstanding writer of this period is a woman, E. Drużbacka (1695–1765), the authoress of many religious as well as lay poems. She had a certain poetic understanding for nature, she knew above all how to give a poetic picture of love with even a considerable amount of sensuousness. The erotic passages are consequently the most interesting in her spacious versified romances. Her works lack the sense of artistic harmony; passages of undeniable poetic charm are interwoven with trivial didactic remarks or satirical digressions of rather coarse humour.

Drużbacka was, strictly speaking, the first Polish woman writer of major importance. Her contemporary was Princess U. Radziwiłł, who wrote a considerable number of plays for the theatre in her residence (collected edition, published 1754). Although without great literary merit, they are interesting in so far that, amidst pastoral, fantastic and mythological dramas, they contain also three adaptations of Molière's comedies—a proof of the progressive penetration of French classicism. Another magnate of that time, W. Rzewuski, when writing for his private theatre, modelled his plays on Racine (though, as we learn from his poem *On Verse Writing*, he knew also the English drama, and excused it for “not conforming to the laws of Horace”). His writings are not eminent in any way, but the very diffusion of the interest in dramatic art brought new elements into literary culture and acted as preparation for the next period. In this progress a step forward, greater in merit than those of the amateur writers of high birth, was made by a Piarist monk, Father S. Konarski (1700–1773), a noted reformer of education, who in the school theatre of the Warsaw *Collegium Nobilium* first began to produce French plays instead of the customary Latin ones. They were performed both in French and in Polish. Among the translations we find the tragedies of Corneille, Racine and Voltaire. Konarski himself wrote an original play (*The Tragedy of Epaminondas*, performed in 1756) which, although

not of high poetic value, is distinguished by its style, free from all baroque artificialities. Simplicity of diction was a logical consequence of Konarski's programme, as he undertook not only to modernize the school system, but also to prune the language of literature, and he devoted to the latter task a special essay under the characteristic title *De emendandis eloquentiae vitis* (1741). His play is of historical importance also on account of the character of its plot. It centres in a conflict between ancient laws and the welfare of the community, and the solution suggested is that, when the supreme good of the country is at stake, it is permissible to go against the oldest law. The subject is most characteristic of Konarski. There were only very few writers (among them King Stanislas Leszczyński) who had the courage to criticize the privilege of the *Liberum Veto*, and nobody had attacked it so vigorously, and with such a wealth of argument as Konarski did in his book *On the Efficient Conduct of Debates* (1760-63). This joining of the new literary programme with the programme of reforms was a symptom of a new era beginning in Polish letters. It was to become a typical trait of the reign of Stanislas Augustus.

In this literature is reflected, in the first place, the great change that took place in Poland in the field of education, both as regards method and organization. The process was started by Konarski. His ideas were soon adopted by all Piarist colleges, while in the Jesuit schools also considerable reforms were introduced. In the year 1773 the Diet called into life a National Education Committee which was in effect a Ministry of Education (the first of its kind in Europe). This took over the supervision of the whole school system (including the Universities of Cracow and Wilno, which had fallen into decay in the seventeenth century), and reorganized it in the spirit of Konarski's reforms. Correspondence was carried on with foreign educators, and their collaboration was invited. Some outstanding specialists from Western countries took part in the competitions for school manuals arranged by the Committee.

In 1765 there came into existence a permanent public theatre, the first in the country, and, although it had to struggle hard against difficulties, it contributed successfully to awakening new tastes among the public, and new ambitions among writers. The chief provider of repertory plays in the early stage of the existence of this "National" theatre was a Jesuit priest, F. Bohomolec (1720-84). The Jesuits had always cultivated theatrical performances in their schools, and after Konarski's reform they also began to give Polish plays instead of the Latin. Bohomolec, then a teacher of rhetoric in a college, unable

to find a suitable repertory for his school theatre, began to supply it himself. He did not try to be original, and borrowed both his plots and characters from Molière, Goldoni and less known Western comedy writers. He adapted these plays for the use of his school by various expedients, such as substituting for feminine characters, in a rather amusing way, elderly uncles, dogs, guitars, etc.; he also tried to give them a local colour, if only in the names. The comedies of Bohomolec, written for the real theatre, are not much better than those written for the school stage. Borrowed ideas are used in them abundantly, the character drawing is very primitive, the plot is mostly mechanical, the comic element is limited to ridiculous situations and caricaturish figures. They display, however, a certain technical skill. They do not lack attempts at the representation of national customs, especially the bad ones, and succeed sometimes in stronger satirical effects.

The name of Bohomolec is also connected with the history of journalism. Newspapers giving information on current events had long been known in Poland (the oldest being *Merkuriusz Polski*, i.e. *The Polish Mercury*, 1661). During the reign of the kings of the Saxon dynasty various attempts were made at the publication of periodicals devoted to learning. Now a new type of publication appeared, a "moral" periodical, such as Steele and Addison had created half a century earlier in *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, and *The Guardian*. In 1763 an experiment was made, and in 1765 the *Monitor* began to be published in Warsaw, at first once and later twice a week, and it continued to appear without interruption until 1784. A whole group of capable writers who were in close relations with the King gathered round this paper, with Bohomolec as its chief editor for most of the twenty years of its existence.

Soon after the *Monitor*, various other periodicals began to appear, of which the most important for literature was *Zabawy Przyjemne i Pożyteczne* (i.e. "Entertainments Pleasant and Useful"), 1769-77. In the poetry it published, as well as in theoretical articles and even in the choice of translations, new literary tendencies were displayed, which may be summed up briefly as "classicist" tendencies, in the French meaning of the word.

*L'Art Poétique* of Boileau became then the supreme code of good taste, although not all of its theses were considered equally binding. F. X. Dmochowski in his *Art of Writing Verse* (1788), although following, on the whole, Boileau's views, was much less rigorous on certain points: he even mentioned Shakespeare, and among his authorities quoted not only Boileau (after Aristotle and Horace), but also the

much more liberal Pope. Similarly other Polish theorists, headed by F. N. Golański, the most popular of them all (the author of the dissertation *On Rhetorics and Poetry*, 1786), while adhering to classicism, did not follow French masters blindly. The native Polish tradition was also revived: the works of the outstanding Polish writers of the past were re-edited, Kochanowski's poems among others (1767), which had not been reprinted for over a hundred years. The aim of such efforts was to link up the new classicism, across the gulf of the long period of Sarmatian baroque, with the native classicism of older days.

In these various undertakings, comprising theatre, periodicals, translations, and re-editions, the personal initiative of King Stanislas Augustus was strongly marked. He was a man of real taste and he spared no efforts to contribute to the development of literary culture. He gathered talented people round him, and was always ready to help them in any way. His "Thursday Dinners" were famous, at which he discussed literature and to which he invited the most prominent writers of his reign.

The oldest of them, after Bohomolec, was A. Naruszewicz (1733-96). Like Bohomolec, he was a native of Lithuania, and like Bohomolec, he became a Jesuit. By his early poems he attracted the King's attention, and won his support. In time Naruszewicz became a bishop and reached high lay dignities as well. His *Lyrics* (4 books, coll. edition 1778) contain numerous poems on political subjects, in which the author shows himself an ardent adherent of the programme of Stanislas Augustus, and fights violently against his opponents. In this respect Naruszewicz reintroduces the old panegyrical manner of poetry; but with him the praise which he bestows so lavishly on the King springs from deep conviction and is animated by sincere feeling.

It is in the odes on the phenomena of nature, their pathos and charm, and the creative power of Providence which speaks through them, that Naruszewicz reaches the height of real poetry (*Hymn to the Sun; To the Clouds; To Dawn; To the Brook; The Four Seasons*). Their mood is restrained and quietly contemplative, full of humble adoration. Naruszewicz proves an unusual artist in variations. He unites the terseness which he has learnt from Horace with the rich imagery of the psalms and the language of philosophical deism elevated to the height of poetry, thus achieving a medium of expression all his own. In civic odes he succeeds occasionally in attaining a stronger tone. He may be called the first poet of truly democratic feelings in Poland. In this spirit he wrote a passionate satire: *On True Nobility*.

Naruszewicz is, indeed, the author of a whole collection of *Satires*

characterized by traits differing from those of the Odes, that is to say, a Juvenal-like anger and a vein of glaring caricature. The vocabulary of these satires is taken largely from street language, and there is no recoil from vulgarity or restraint from profanity. The satires are, in a way, a treasury of idiom, opening up Rabelaisian perspectives of it, which is rather unexpected in the period of the classicist sifting of diction.

Naruszewicz cultivated also other kinds of classic poetry; he wrote fables, and in his own day his pastorals were admired. Stanislas Augustus, discerning scholarly interests, in addition to literary ones, in his favourite, urged him to write an extensive history of Poland of a kind which did not then exist, and Naruszewicz, attracted by this idea, undertook the task. After a few years he published the first volume (1780), which was followed in the next six years by five successive ones, carrying the subject down to the marriage of Jadwiga and Jagiello. The prose of Naruszewicz is pure and limpid, but rather dry. From the scholarly point of view, however, the importance of his historical work was enormous, owing to the abundance of documentary sources considered, to the author's critical attitude towards them and to the pragmatic connection of events (in spite of the chronicle-like manner of the narration).

The last years before the partitions tore Naruszewicz away from historiography to work in the central organs of Government, and he was never to return to literary labours. After the great national calamities he was not able to write any more; he fell into melancholy and survived the last partition only by a year.

The most popular, outstanding and representative figure in the literature of King Stanislas Augustus' time was I. Krasicki (1735-1801), a man whose career was still more brilliant than that of Naruszewicz, and equally due to the support of the King. He belonged to a wealthy family, but as there was a large number of children he was destined by his father for the Church. Towards the end of his life he was made archbishop of Gniezno, but as though through irony of fate, the investiture took place only a short time before the last partition.

His literary output is comprehensive and extremely varied. The didactic and moralizing element is abundant in it, both in direct form and indirectly as satire. Wit was Krasicki's predominant faculty; he did not, however, lack poetic sensitiveness. His few lyrics represent his nature as responding poetically to the passage of life. To live outside the noise of the "great world", in the privacy of retirement, was the poetic dream of the man who in practical life was a lay and

Church dignitary, highly esteemed by everybody, even by Frederick the Great of Prussia, for his social accomplishments. The apostrophe of one of his most expressive poems *To Thought* reaches its climax in the words: "Give happiness by stealth"; another poem, with an apostrophe "to a quiet corner" is characteristic by its very title *Seclusion*. After the example of his masters, Horace and Kochanowski, Krasicki celebrates balance of mind and moderation, and still more pronouncedly he tries to avoid both extreme heights and extreme depths, one could even say becomes their sworn enemy. Because of this, exaggeration is the target against which his satire is most often pointed, and the majority of his poems bear the character of satire.

Krasicki's gift for seeing things in a comic light even exceeded what was necessary for his purposes as a satirist. His first longer work, a heroï-comical poem, *The Mousiad* (1775) is a paradoxical specimen of almost pure parody, with no satirical bearing, and no definite attack in any direction. Related by the subject to the classic *Batrachomyomachia*, and by the stanza (the *ottava rima*) to the poems of Tasso and Ariosto, it depicts a war between rats and cats, with the reign of the legendary Polish monarch Popiel for its background.

The next poem of Krasicki, also mock-heroic, had already a definite satirical sting in it; again, however, it displays the paradoxical character of his capacities; it is a satire that one would expect least of all from the pen of a bishop, a satire on monastic life. Its title is *Monachomachia* (1778), and it deals with a dispute between two monasteries which passes into real fighting, the weapons used (as in Boileau's *Le Lutrin*) being the bulky volumes of theological works. Krasicki's satire is more amusing than pungent; it springs more from the sense of the comic and from light irony than from indignation. Among his contemporaries this unusual way, chosen by the bishop to express his disapproval of certain bad sides of the life in monasteries, caused unpleasant surprise and some bitterness. In order to avoid misunderstandings, Krasicki—in a manner characteristic of him as a follower of the middle course—published *Antimonachomachia* (1780) in which he explains, with finesse and wit, that it was not the monasteries but the monks, and only the bad ones, that he had in mind. Where there are good ones, he is ready to praise.

Richer in substance and more extensive in satirical perspectives is the prose novel *The Adventures of Mr Nicholas Find-Out* (1776), which is also a piece of "educational" fiction and a "Robinsonad". Young Nicholas is at first being brought up after the old Polish



fashion, then he is entrusted to a French tutor who initiates him into the study of "sentiments". The wreck of a ship throws him on the isle of Nipoo, which is inhabited by an ideal society living in a state of nature, and naturally honest, judicious and industrious. Among them Mr Find-Out matures and develops, to come back eventually to his country, and there to begin the life of a true citizen. Scenes and characters are only sketched here, the tale is however full of verve, especially in the satirical parts.

Krasicki's tendency towards social didacticism found its truest accents in his prose work *Pan Podstoli* (1778 foll.) which on account of its dimensions could be regarded as a novel, and on the ground of its construction as a series of pictures of the kind of those devoted to Sir Roger de Coverley in the *Spectator* by Addison and Steele; in reality, it is, however, an extensive didactic treatise of the kind which was so popular during the Renaissance (to mention only Castiglione's *The Courtier*). Pan Podstoli, a model gentleman and citizen after Krasicki's ideas, extols the *mores antiqui* but at the same time he approves of everything sensible and useful which the new times afford. We become acquainted with his home, his husbandry, his family, his relations with his neighbours and servants, and we learn his opinions on various matters.

Krasicki's talent as a satirist reached its zenith in the collection of *Satires* (from 1779 onwards). The primary charm of these works is the natural and free flow of their diction which never passes beyond the bounds of the ordinary conversational language. Krasicki appears here as a still greater artist than in his earlier poems, in the way of sketching character; he gives indeed sketches only, but the drawing is masterly.

As a writer, Krasicki reached the highest level in *Fables and Parables* (1779) which he continued in the collection of *New Fables* (published only posthumously, 1803). In the period in which the fables of La Fontaine bore supreme sway in this domain, Krasicki chose a completely different technique, the technique of the most rigorous restraint in narration, of rejecting all detail, all accessories, all background, and of concentrating attention solely on the most essential moments of the story. He attains an almost incredible conciseness, of which it has been said that Phaedrus, in comparison, appears garrulous; and this brevity is accompanied by the greatest possible simplicity of style. Every word has a constructive meaning here. Nevertheless, within the limits of this rigorism there is room for words which introduce humour, characteristic features, a dramatic element, and so become

focuses of poetic energy. This energy reveals itself also in gradation, in antithesis ("The lord laughed, so did the minister, but the poor people cried") or in enumerations which take one by surprise ("patrons' favours, women's fancy and autumn weather", as examples of mutability). With a smile of irony these fables present under the cloak of allegory a brutal and unscrupulous world. Irony is a sort of shield of defence against these feelings. The moral of the fables can be summed up as certain general indications in practical ethics, the recommendation of sound judgment, of foresight, of modesty, of love of freedom and quietness, that is to say of the virtues which Krasicki has also glorified in his lyrics. *The Fables* of Krasicki, one of the highest achievements in brevity of style, became one of the most popular works in the language; since the first years of their publication children have learnt them by heart, and a number of phrases from them have become proverbial.

Another writer who was on terms of intimate friendship with King Stanislas Augustus, S. Trembecki (c. 1737-1812), was not inferior to Krasicki in the extent of his interests and his literary culture. But from other points of view he can be considered as an antithesis to Krasicki. His achievement consists in a small number of poems, mostly short, which were never collected during the author's life; some were not even printed, as Trembecki did not care about them or consider them important. There are, however, deeper differences between him and Krasicki as well as Naruszewicz, who were both dignitaries of the church, and whose religious feeling, tepid as it may have been, was sincere. Trembecki was a type of the eighteenth century *esprit fort* who, if ever he mentioned religion or church, did so only to sneer. The tone of his panegyrical poems is servile and basely submissive, a quality never found in Krasicki or Naruszewicz. Still, he was sincerely attached to Stanislas Augustus and proved his attachment at a critical time when he accompanied the dethroned king into exile and did not leave him until his death.

As a writer he left some occasional verse, a few fables, a few "anacreontics", some translations, and only one relatively longer poem (*Sofiówka*) descriptive of a garden which a magnate had laid out in the Ukraine for his exotic wife. His style, which is the expression of Trembecki's individual perception of things, has won him an eminent place in literature. He has a particular feeling for the exuberance of nature, even in its wild and fierce manifestations. He is attracted by whatever in nature is sinewy, juicy, shaggy, hoofed, taloned, prolific and explosive. It is due to this predilection that his fables have a

force which gives them character of their own, although they are only adaptations from La Fontaine. Trembecki looked for inspiration rather in Lucretius, and both the philosophical texture and the poetic atmosphere of *Sofiówka* are most indebted to this master. The richness of his poetic gifts finds expression also in a strange contrast: this singer of the luxuriant energies of nature, even though they be wild and unwieldy, displays at the same time an unusual sensitiveness for everything that is gracefully gentle, airy and serene. Hence, it is to him that eighteenth century Polish literature owes the prettiest poems on dance, entertainment, pleasantry, and sprightly *salon* atmosphere.

He is capable of writing, like Krasicki, in a style of elegant simplicity; but he is capable, as well, of drawing on other linguistic resources without hesitating to use an archaism or a provincial idiom, and when necessary coining new words with great boldness. Similarly his syntax, simple and transparent in some poems, is twisted elsewhere with inversions which at times make his verse almost enigmatic. At other moments he bewilders the reader with periphrases which exceed all that Naruszewicz was able to achieve in that respect. He sometimes overdraws, his effect reaching almost a caricature of his own manner; in general, however, he displays a keen artistic sense. None of the Polish poets of the eighteenth century put so much effort into moulding his own poetic diction.

It is a paradox of chronology that Mme K. Beniśławska (1747-1806) was some twelve years younger than Trembecki. For, the whole world of her feelings, the whole of her mental culture link her up rather with the seventeenth century. She is the authoress of one collection only, under the title *Songs Sung to Myself* (1776), which contains poems on religious subjects; a cycle of meditations on the Lord's Prayer and the *Ave Maria*, and a series of hymns written on various occasions. Beniśławska came from the most distant north-eastern provinces of Poland, and she was twenty-six when the First Partition separated her part of the country from the bulk of the Polish state. Her diction is uneven; it sinks often to the level of flat prose and triviality, though never so low as Drużbacka's. Well read in theological literature, she fills many a page with argumentative deliberation on dogmatic mysteries; she enters into scholastic formulas and takes up controversy. Large parts of her cycle are characterized by a litany-like monotony. But we are here incessantly in the presence of a soul burning with an ardent love of God, and it is this ardour that moves and convinces the reader. Her prayers are not for earthly goods not even for celestial ones: they

beseech for a complete dissolution of Man's own will in that of God. She keeps our attention riveted on this unusual poetic matter, akin to the enunciations of great mystics, by means of the intensity of her style, springing from the conviction that one must conquer heaven by violence. The whole collection can be defined as a poetic account of the preparatory stages of mysticism, expressed in a language of passion and struggle. This struggle is carried on by a "sinful little woman" who reproaches herself that she enters the path of spiritual discipline so late, being twenty-eight at the time of writing her poems.

The collection of Beniśławska, to a still greater degree than the already mentioned *Various Thoughts on Things Ultimate* (1766), proves that the voluminous ascetic and mystic literature of the eighteenth century was the product of an unusual culture of emotion. This culture bore, in Beniśławska's book, one of the finest of its poetic fruits; but it was at the time when the whole of the literary life in Poland was already turned in another direction. Thus her collection was read only in her province, and a long time passed before its poetic value was discovered.

Although far from being mystical, the epoch was by no means irreligious. Two poems, *Morning Song* and *Evening Song*, which have become the most popular poems in all Polish poetry and still are the every day prayer of the Catholics, date from this time. They are prayers for protection, and acts of adoration, devoid of any paradoxes of mystic ecstasy, modest in their generalizations, restrained and simple in diction, in a word more in keeping with the national character, the practical recommendations of the Church and the character of the period.

The author of these songs, as well as of a carol equally popular, *Christ is being born*, is F. Karpiński (c. 1741-1825), a poet who also voiced many other typical feelings of his time. From classicism he took the love for simplicity and naturalness, for which he even argued theoretically, both with regard to syntax and the choice of words and imagery. This is most remarkable in his translation of the *Psalms* which to a considerable degree is a re-handling of Kochanowski's version with a view to simplification; the same feature predominates in his original religious poems. Karpiński is, however, still better known as "the poet of the heart", the author of love poems, and especially of pastorals. There is much cloying sentimentality in the pastorals; but over and over again true feelings come to the surface—longing, anxiety, sadness of parting, and, above all, sensuality.

The conditions of his life and work have left an imprint on his poetry. His metaphors, comparisons, epithets abound in motives of

tillage and husbandry. Love is for him "the dear harvest": *The Fear of a Man near Death* in a poem under this title is represented as anxiety about the roof and walls of the house, and finally about a chest filled with the most precious treasure. God himself is for him "the husbandman of the world" to whom the dearest praise is "the praise of the working hand".

This sense of rural economy coloured his humour in a particular way on which Laurence Sterne was not without some influence. A humorous poem of *A journey from Dobiecko to Skala* may serve as a proof of this; but his talent as a realist reached its highest degree in his prose *Memoirs*, in which he characterizes himself with a sincerity and unrestrained outspokenness which reminds one of J. J. Rousseau.

His familiarity with country life is noticeable also in Karpiński's comedy *The Rent*. The leading idea of its plot was rather advanced for its time: a young squire wants to seduce the daughter of a peasant tenant, and meeting with resistance he eventually marries her; in the last act it comes to light that the tenant is a ruined squire himself. Rural life, very far from idyllic, is represented in the Mazovian Song in which a peasant's wife becomes the mistress of a squire. Karpiński sang also the song of misery in a poem *A Beggar by the Roadside*. The character of his fancy was equally expressed in his patriotic poems, the most appealing one of them having the form of lamentations of a homeless beggar.

Another feature, typical of some of his poems, is the songfulness of their verse and stanzas, arising out of a masterful use of refrains and the artistic symmetry of syntax. This is why so many of them have really become songs.

With the name of Karpiński, that of F. D. Książnin (1750-1807) is usually connected, and there are certainly similarities between them. In the work of both lyrical poetry prevails, in both there is much of pastoral conventionality, and erotic motives play a considerable role. Their poetic as well as their personal history is, however, quite different; Książnin was nearing his ordination when the Society of Jesus was dissolved by the Pope. The candidate for a Jesuit's habit woke up one morning to find himself a lay youth, and moved to the capital where he obtained work in the National Library. The reaction of the sudden passage from convent to lay life found its expression in the first larger volumes of Książnin's poetry. The would-be Jesuit stepped forward with a comprehensive collection of erotic poems (*Erotics*, 1779), dazzling the reader with a wealth of baroque rhetoric and *concetti*. The atmosphere of his lyric is not sentimental but

anacreontic. We find here translations of all the *Anacreontea*, and an infinite number of variations on their subjects; other poems are also kept in the same tone. The all-comprising power of love, its delights and bitterness, its internal contradictions and oddities—these are the subjects of Kniaźnin's large collection divided into ten books. The excellence of his verbal expression makes one think of Robert Herrick. In the emotional colouring of the poems there is a great variety; humour and gaiety are not lacking, and even frivolity; but towards the end of the collection more and more often a note of sadness is ringing.

It was difficult to continue with that kind of poetry, especially in the atmosphere of national calamity after the first partition. He was engaged as a private tutor in the house of Prince Adam Czartoryski, and he was to spend there nearly the whole of his life. Thus connected with the court of the great magnate he became the provider of poems for various ceremonies and other occasions. His new poems respond to contemporary events of great importance, always in a manner worthy of the subject, always with a fine feeling for the nation's welfare and honour. These poems, however, are more in the nature of versified journalism than poetry. It was only at the moments when he was speaking of national misfortunes that Kniaźnin was still capable of truly poetic accents. A greater power of expression characterizes his paraphrases of the psalms and his own religious poems in the style of the psalms. But again and again he went back to the old love subjects, either re-writing his own former poems, unfortunately most often with poor results, or writing new ones, differing from the *Erotics* in so far only that melancholy was decidedly prevailing now that motives of distance, disunion, and hopelessness appeared more and more frequently.

These changes in the tone of his writings are undoubtedly connected with the poet's personal life. Kniaźnin felt all the national disasters very deeply, and after the last partition he became insane.

There were rather numerous minor poets in the epoch of Stanislas Augustus. Dramatic literature was cultivated with special preference. Naruszewicz, Krasicki, Trembecki, Karpiński, Kniaźnin, all paid homage to the theatre, either by translations, or by trying their powers in original plays. These attempts did not, on the whole, produce works of high standing. However, a special indigenous type of the adaptation of foreign comedies which had already been practised by Bohomolec gave most fortunate results in the case of F. Zabłocki (1754–1821), a prolific provider of repertory plays for the National Theatre. Com-

pletely void of invention in the matter of plot and character drawing, he was an excellent stylist, with an astonishing intuition for idiom, thus capable of giving a play re-written after a foreign model a completely different atmosphere. He often took plays of second and third rate authors, and by rehandling them improved amazingly the literary value of his originals. For instance, a comedy by an unassuming French writer, Romagnesi, entitled *Le Petit-maitre amoureux*, was transformed under his pen into something glittering with wit, and, one may say, most authentically Polish; in fact, in the frame of a borrowed plot, it gives a picture of the life and manners of the period of Stanislas Augustus. A still more surprising phenomenon is a play entitled *Sarmatism*, the plot and characters of which are taken from an insignificant French comedy *Les Nobles de province*, by Hauteroche, representing a quarrel between two neighbours about the boundary line of their estates that is happily solved by the marriage of their children. It is enough to compare any passage of Zablocki's text with the original to see how essential it was for his imagination to find a basis in somebody else's plot, and at the same time how bold his imagination was in re-shaping his material and what sense of realism he had at his disposal.

The most original Polish comedy of the eighteenth century was the fruit of political propaganda. It is the *Deputy's Return*, by J. U. Niemcewicz (1757-1841), at that time a young parliamentarian, one of the eminent representatives of that patriotic and reforming party which carried through the Constitution of 3 May 1791. The work was both written and produced during the Four Years' Diet (1788-92), when the fate of the new constitution was in the balance. The plot is rather conventional. The hero, a young deputy, Valerius, an ardent partisan of political reform, is in love with Teresa, and is loved by her; in the way of their union, however, there stand the parents of the girl: the father, a worshipper of the old privileges and the worst traditions of the gentry, never willing even to admit the thought that anything could be changed in them; the mother, obsessed with the fashion for pastoralism and various foreign novelties. Against this background two opposite tendencies of civic thought are presented, two contrasting types of patriotism and civilization. The play is not a work of great art, but an interesting picture of the time with considerable documentary value. It was also the first work generally known of a writer who was to become one of the most persevering, active members of the national movement, and one of its most prolific authors. He was an inspirer and innovator in many a field, representative at the same time of a good tradition, and he became in later years a highly ap-

preciated living link between the period of Stanislas Augustus and the post-partition generations.

Another figure which, although in another way, has become an equally strong link between the two epochs and the two generations was W. Bogusławski (1760-1820), called the "father of the Polish theatre", the first man, indeed, in Poland who sacrificed all his life to the theatre: as actor, producer, provider of plays for the repertory, and director both of permanent theatres (in Warsaw and Lwów) and of travelling companies of actors with whom he wandered all over the country, and across the partition frontiers, spreading a love for dramatic literature and for poetic language. His repertory was enormous and comprised the works of all the greater European literatures (he produced, among others, Sheridan and also Shakespeare in the versions of Ducis). The most vivid play of his own is *Cracovians and Highlanders*, a vaudeville with a petty love plot displayed against an interesting background of the antagonism of two neighbouring provinces. It ends in accents of harmony and unity, which on the first night, on the eve of the Kościuszko uprising, rang with a definite political meaning. To-day this meaning is no longer felt; the play, however, owing to its *verve* has still remained an excellent popular show. In the history of Polish literature it holds also a significant position as the first longer work based entirely on peasant life and customs. Much was written in Poland about the country people and the conditions of their existence (as we have seen above) during the eighteenth century. Bogusławski went one step farther by filling nearly the whole of his play with figures of peasants and by making them humanly attractive and moving.

The novel was much less popular than the theatre in the Poland of the eighteenth century. The works of Krasicki, *The Adventures of Mr Nicholas Find-Out*, and *Pan Podstoli*, had remained the best achievements in this line; other novelists were mostly only imitators of these. Comparatively more interesting is M. Krajewski's *A Girl of Podolia brought up in the State of Nature* (1784) which by its very title betrays its kinship with the philosophical and educational theories of Rousseau. It is also noteworthy because of the discussion which it called forth. Certain literary value is to be found likewise in the pseudo-historical novels of the gifted publicist F. Jezierski, such as *Goworek* (1789) and *Rzepicha* (1790), which were a medium for the popularization of radical ideas on social and political problems.

Among many diarists and writers of memoirs A. Kitowicz (1728-1804) deserves to be mentioned in the first place as the author of the *Description of Customs and Manners during the Reign of Augustus III*,



a priceless document for Poland's social history in the first half of the eighteenth century, giving an insight into the changes which took place in the course of a few score years. Kitowicz is not always a skilful writer, and he never delves below the surface of things, but the surface is depicted in most lively colours. There are many other interesting memoirs written by men engaged in the active politics of the time, with King Stanislas Augustus at the head (who penned his recollections in French).

Unusually abundant was the political literature. Two personalities tower here above all others: Staszic and Kołłątaj. S. Staszic (1755-1826), by origin a townsman, educated in German universities, was one of the most learned Poles of his day. Science—particularly geology—was the main field of his studies, in the course of which he carried through some research work of great importance. But he was hardly less devoted to social and political affairs. He represented his ideas on the beginnings of social life and civilization in a bulky work entitled *Humankind*, which is, unfortunately, completely unreadable as he wrote it in verse, though he had not a trace of poetic gift, not even a sufficient understanding of poetic technique. His first great work on the public problems of the day is entitled *Remarks on the Life of Jan Zamoyski* (1785) and has the form of historical reflections; another work, written at a more feverish time, during the session of the Diet which was to reform the constitutional structure of the State, expresses by its very title *Warnings to Poland* (1790) its more passionate character. Neither of the two works is rigorously planned, though almost the whole scope of government and social organization is covered in them. Nevertheless, a great sensitiveness, imaginative power, and high emotional tone are maintained throughout, especially in passages dealing with social inequalities.

Much like Niemcewicz and Bogusławski, Staszic was also to become a link between the independent Poland of the old days, and the Poland of the post-partition period. His activity as a political writer and a scientist not only did not stop after the partitions but still increased. In all these varied fields of work he was guided by the firm belief that "even a great nation may fall, but only a base one can decay".

The writings of H. Kołłątaj (1750-1812) are also representative of the political thought of the time. He was a man of whom it can be said that he contributed most to the preparation for that turning point in Polish history, the constitution of 1791, both by his writings and by acting as inspirer and organizer of a whole group of collaborators to whom his contemporaries gave the name of "Kołłątaj's Forge". Like Staszic, he had received a thorough education, and like him he

was a scholar. The field of his studies extended over the history of law, social philosophy and ethics, and later he was to publish important works on these matters. Belonging to a noble family with means, he had, in contradistinction to Staszic, an open road before him to a public career. He had hardly reached his University degree when he was appointed a member of the Committee of National Education and became most active there. He was twenty-seven when he was entrusted with the reform of the Jagellonian University at Cracow, at that time fallen into decay. He carried through this very difficult and responsible task in the course of a few years, and acted later for several years as Rector of the reorganized institution. Moreover, he soon engaged in strictly political activities which he particularly developed during the "Four Years' Diet". He was not a deputy but was the principal adviser and theorist of the party of reform, and in course of time became its head and its very soul. His principal works on public affairs are connected with the preparation of the constitution; the first of them has the form of *Letters of an Anonymous Writer* (1788-89) to the President of the Diet, and is a detailed three-volume programme of the reorganization of the State in all domains of its life. Another work, *The Political Law of the Polish Nation* (1790), is as it were a quintessence of the first, at the same time a supplement to it, being a complete project of a new constitution, which indeed became the basis of the constitution as passed by the Diet. Kołłątaj was included in the new government as a cabinet minister. When the succeeding events had broken up the achievement of the constitution, Kołłątaj emigrated, and with two collaborators, I. Potocki and F. X. Dmochowski, wrote its history in the book *On the Passing and the Overthrow of the Polish Constitution of the 3rd of May* (1793), which not only gives an account of the events but is also a kind of testament of the politically re-born, independent Polish state for the generations which had to live under foreign rule. Its leading idea might have been put briefly in the words once spoken by J. J. Rousseau: "Poles! if you cannot prevent your neighbours from devouring your nation, do your best to make it impossible for them to digest it."

Kołłątaj is much less a theoretician than Staszic and philosophical digressions are absent from his writings. He approaches the solution of practical tasks by direct methods. His prose, far less emotional than that of Staszic, towers above it by the lucid and terse arrangement of the contents, by the vividness of examples and an energetic rhetorical rhythm.

The disaster of the partitions, by breaking the whole of national

life, brought about a breach in the continuity of literary life too. The older poets mostly stopped writing. Naruszewicz found it impossible to return even to his historical work. Książnin lost his reason. Karpiński bade farewell to his "lute" and as a settler worked at the clearing of woodland. Krasicki remained active as editor of a moralizing periodical only. Trembecki became a sort of hermit, living as a resident guest with one of his wealthy friends: he was the only one to continue poetic pursuits and slowly chiselled away at the best one of his poems. J. Jasiński, a young poet of great promise, perished on the battlefield. Niemcewicz, as Kościuszko's aide-de-camp, followed his chief into Russian captivity and afterwards went for a long time to America.

For a few years hardly anything was printed in Polish. In literature, as in other domains of life, despair and stagnation exercised their paralysing influence. There were people—they were even quite numerous—who tried to preserve to memory all the fierce awe and apprehension of those exceptional experiences which they had to go through with the whole nation. Their writings had no chance of being printed and most of them remained in manuscript. There are but few things of literary value among them; they rather appeal to us by their documentary force.

A new generation, however, was growing to maturity, and its voice was heard in connection with fresh political events. Its spirit is best expressed in a song which was written by one of the older writers—J. Wybicki (1745–1822)—and which has become a song not only of that generation of Poles but of all the generations to come, having risen from an occasional poem to the height of a national anthem. Its introductory words express the change of ideas which had been effected in a short time. Before the partitions people had identified the country with the State; the fall of the State was synonymous for them with the destruction of the nation. The song of Wybicki not only expresses hope, but also proclaims the joyful discovery that nationality survives the fall of the State as long as there are people who consciously appertain to it: "Poland has not yet perished as long as we are alive". This belief becomes the belief of the whole Polish nation, the inspiration of the new Polish literature. It will be expressed by the "legionary poets", who take part in the Napoleonic wars; it will be expressed by the "Warsaw classicists", not very productive but of considerable merit for the extension of literary taste among the public; it will be expressed by J. P. Woronicz, who from a writer of pastorals turns into a national psalmist and prophet; and on its foundation the "romantic" poets will erect new structures of poetry, of universal appeal.

## B. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY POLISH ART

THE history of eighteenth-century Poland can be divided into three more or less equal parts both from the political point of view and from that of art. The first period was during the reign of Augustus II and ended in 1733; the second coincided with the reign of Augustus III up to the year 1763, and the third can be set during the reign of Stanislas Augustus (Poniatowski). The reigns of Augustus II and his successor can be considered as a historical unit in the field of political life and of art, under the appellation of the Saxon Period. But the reign of King Stanislas Augustus stands out in high relief: with the accession of this King to the throne of Poland new relations appeared in the art of the country, and a new style was introduced. Art in Poland fell under the guidance of a conscious and purposeful management. Baroque was supplanted by the Classical Style.

These three periods in the eighteenth century were not of equal significance to Polish art. The first thirty years produced least of what was of merit and new. Augustus II, who is considered an eminent patron of the arts and a great builder, did literally nothing for Polish art. Although he spent much time in Warsaw, he collected works of art only for Dresden, and he embellished nothing but Dresden. In modern times, no King of Poland had been so indifferent to the art of the country. Even his own residence in the capital was an ordinary country-gentleman's town mansion remodelled on his orders, and this remodelling was quite bereft of any artistic value. No eminent Polish or foreign artist appeared in the Commonwealth during his reign. There were some, of course, who had commenced their careers under King John III Sobieski: the polonized Dutchman Tylman of Gamern and the Italian J. Belotti were nearing the end of their period of creative effort, whilst Pompeo Ferrari was then in the prime of his production. But building and artistic output afterwards declined to exceptionally low levels: quantitatively, the number of new buildings erected at the beginning of the eighteenth century was as low as during the catastrophic years of the Swedish invasion in the middle of the seventeenth. Relatively the best buildings were put up in the western parts of the country; the majority, such as Obrzyck and Owińsk, after the plans of Ferrari. Churches and palaces commenced towards the end of the seventeenth century were completed, the large Jesuit church at Poznań was finished in 1701, the famous church of St Anne at Cracow in 1702, the towers of the Jasna Góra monastery at Częstochowa

in the same year, Rydzyna palacc in 1704. These structures are typical of the prevailing style in those days: a late Roman Baroque traceable back to Borromini, a massive, ponderous, rich style, in which complex and unusual solutions were sought; elongated, straight-lined and traditional churches were eschewed in favour of semicircular or rather elliptical constructions. The art of the first three decades of the eighteenth century in effect was still a part of the preceding century. A new and specific eighteenth-century art only began to appear during the 'thirties of the century, more or less concurrently with the accession of Augustus III.

### THE SAXON ROCOCO

The new conditions which arose during the seventeenth century were consolidated and brought into higher relief in the art and life of the country during the eighteenth century. Contraries became more marked: the contrast of an inconsiderable, all-powerful, rich group of landed aristocracy with the broad masses of the middle classes of the gentry. The contrasts were not only evident in the domains of wealth, power, education and upbringing, but also in the field of cultural predilections. The highest social spheres gravitated towards Western Europe and whole-heartedly participated in its cultural life; the middle classes, however, consciously barred themselves off from the West, to follow their own mode of life. Every Polish gentleman spoke at least one other language: the adherents of the Western world spoke French fluently, but the conservative gentry kept to Latin. This duality in the Polish civilization of the eighteenth century conduced to make it most heterogeneous and interesting. One group was excessively addicted to foreign ways and fashions; the other was wrapped up in its rural self-sufficiency and tradition. Thus it was that the epoch was indelibly marked with the rivalry between foreign and purely Polish (so-called Sarmatian) influences. What had been known as "Old-Polish" customs and attire only now achieved universal acceptance amongst the broad masses of the gentry: the style was a queer blend of Italian borrowings and of colourful semi-oriental dress. The typical belts or waistbands, the best-known and most prized part of the former Polish costume, long, colourful and richly patterned fabrics, came into use after 1700, and their manufacture became general only during the eighteenth century.

The contrasts between the Western styles and the Polish were in some measure contrasts between East and West. Eschewing the West, the gentry none the less did not fear the influences of the East. The

colourful, ornate nature of the latter suited the taste of the Polish country-gentlemen. They maintained constant contacts with Turkey, and through the Sublime Porte with the Near and the Far East—contacts which were in turn warlike and amicable. This oriental infiltration into the native culture of Poland commenced during the eighteenth century; it affected the most evident aspects of external life and appeared in the shape of rich carpets in the houses, in the arms used and the dress worn. The Polish *kontusz* was the expression of a semi-oriental fashion, whilst the belts already mentioned were imported from Turkey and Persia before their manufacture was commenced in Poland. These waistbands underwent specific transformation in Poland although their oriental style remained: none the less, they can very easily be distinguished from the Eastern product.

This style was, however, quite absent in the life, dwellings and attire of the highest social classes and those who made common cause with them. These if anything imported their furniture and clothes. Other contrasts appeared within the ranks of the gentry and found their origin as it were in the antagonism between the old, local traditions and the oriental innovations: the houses remained as simple and severe as the attire was rich. Other contrasts were the outcome of the fervent Roman Catholicism of the country: the manor-houses were simple but the churches rich and ornate.

Polish art had passed through a severe crisis during the seventeenth century owing to the destruction caused by repeated wars and invasions; the old artistic order of Poland had been broken and alien models had been permitted to enter; Baroque was introduced. This imported style began at once to undergo assimilation in the eighteenth century; the eyes of the people had been adapted and accustomed to it whilst the Baroque in turn adapted itself to local customs. This process of adaptation was primarily brought about by the application of simplifications. Particularly in the construction of the village parish churches did it prove impossible to retain Baroque with all its magnificent and generous proportions. General acceptance and simplification proceeded with standardization of forms. The provincial manor-houses and churches created their own simplified and polonized types. It is indeed difficult to imagine a Polish landscape without its typical squire's residence and the simple eighteenth-century village church. Fifty years proved ample to develop a specific Polish Baroque style.

But the urban centres, the wealthy monasteries, and munificent founders erected palaces and places of worship after the new, alien

models which in the eighteenth century increasingly enriched and diversified the old Baroque. A new duality arose in the Polish school of that century: one based both on foreign Baroque and on that of Poland; in other words, a contrast between progress and tradition, richness and simplicity, heterogeneity and standardization. It is difficult to find a greater contrast than that between the richly embellished, subtly designed churches erected in Wilno and Lwów towards the middle of the century and those built coevally in the rural areas, yet both were Baroque in style.

During the period from the opening of the sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, Polish art on the whole had only two components: a Polish and an Italian, a traditional and a new, a medieval and a renaissance. After the crisis of the seventeenth century, relations became more complicated. First, the local factor endured in ornamentation and in wood-carving. These, although based on autochthonous conceptions and execution, possess such high artistic qualities that they can be classified amongst the most valuable relics of Polish art. Secondly, the Italian factor likewise endured. The sons of polonized Italian artists continued to practise their fathers' professions, and new-comers from Italy swelled their ranks. There were few Italian sculptors and painters in eighteenth-century Poland, but the majority of the architects were still Italians. At this juncture, however, factors neither Polish nor Italian began to appear in Polish art.

Thirdly, when the Electors of Saxony were Kings of Poland, closer artistic contacts could not but arise between the two lands. The court artists were brought in from Dresden. These brought with them the Rococo which was flourishing in Dresden at the time. Art, indeed, was flourishing in the whole of Southern Germany, and superfluous South German artists, builders and sculptors sought work in other countries. Whilst Saxon influences chiefly proceeded from Dresden to Warsaw, the southern parts of the Commonwealth were invaded by artists from Austria and Moravia.

Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the France of Louis XIV had become in art a model to the rest of Europe. The highest Polish classes sought inspiration in Paris. All these various component elements were often fused within a single work, or appeared separately; the Polish influence was paramount in wooden building, the Italian and the South German in ecclesiastical structures, and the French and Saxon in the construction of palaces.

Architecture occupied a premier place in the art of those times; sculpture and painting were subordinate to it, although carving had

achieved unusual results. In addition, artistic handicrafts, weaving particularly, occupied a high place in the culture of the country.

The Rococo style was brought to Poland by Saxon artists under Augustus III, chiefly in the Warsaw palaces. Jauch, director of the royal building works, was in Warsaw from 1743, and Knöffel, Longue-lune, Chiaveri, Knöbel and Krubsatius, the most eminent Saxon architects who built up modern Dresden, were also active there. French architects also helped to embellish the capital with their Rococo buildings; Ricaud de Tirregaille and Coustaut are amongst the better known. The Polish architects likewise soon adapted themselves to the new style, the most beautiful examples of which were after the plans of Antoni Fontana, who came of an entirely polonized Italian family.

The old royal palace at Warsaw was largely reconstructed during the reign of Augustus III and given the same outward structure as many Dresden palaces. Chiaveri designed the plans, but they were carried out finally in 1747 by Knöffel. Part of the façade has been preserved, but the interior was transformed under Stanislas Augustus. The all-powerful minister of the Saxon Kings, Count Brühl, had one of the old palaces reconstructed in the new Rococo style (as from 1750); it is now the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Another, similarly reconstructed by the Princes Sułkowski, is one of the buildings of the Piłsudski University of Warsaw. New palaces were erected in Warsaw by the Bieliński, Mniszech, Czartoryski, Branicki, Wielopolski and other aristocratic families. These were palaces "*entre cour et jardin*", with typical delicate contours, light, full of elegance and charm, abundantly decorated with carvings, vases, figures of Cupids and of women, and heraldic shields; they were highly typical of the Dresden version of the Rococo. Few remain; part were reconstructed in the Classical fashion during the later eighteenth century; others were demolished in the nineteenth century to make way for blocks of flats.

After Warsaw the provinces began to build in the new style. The King erected a Rococo palace at Grodno, side by side with the ancient castle. The Wiśniowiecki family built one at Wiśniowiec in the eastern borderlands, the Mniszechs at Dukla in the Carpathian foothills, the Branickis at Białystok, the Lubomirskis at Rzeszów, the Potockis at Krystynopol and at Radzyń. Radzyń palace, by Fontana, about 1750, is one of the most beautiful and best-preserved examples. It was given by the owners to the nation.

Meanwhile the gentry continued to erect manor-houses of a quite different style, often constructed of wood. As late as the middle of the



eighteenth century they still had high, steep roofs of a construction different from that of Western Europe, jutting corners reminiscent of the former defensive bastions, and uncovered rafters in the rooms. These simply designed manor-houses are often of great beauty and may be of greater interest than the seats of the aristocracy, which were in a style typical for virtually the whole of Europe.

Churches of the eighteenth century are scattered over all Poland in great number. They are remarkable for the extremes so typical of that century, some greatly simplified in structure and restrained in ornamentation; others, exceptionally ornate. The latter were by architects who delighted in the most complicated designs and in edifices of elliptical shape. Three groups of such churches appeared virtually simultaneously upon the territories of the Commonwealth; one, under Augustus II and for the most part after the plans of Pompeo Ferrari, comprises churches in Western Poland; the second comprises structures raised mostly by Thomas Rejzler in Central Poland, chiefly in the voivodeship of Lublin; the third group was that initiated by General de Witt in South-Eastern Poland, pre-eminently in Lwów. The most valuable examples of the artistic relics of the ecclesiastical architecture of that epoch are in the eastern borderlands, in the Lwów and Wilno districts. The first group were churches built in pure Rococo style, for the most part small buildings elegant in line, with delicate ornamentation. The most important is the beautiful church of St George in Lwów (about 1745), but there are similar edifices near Nawarja, Hodowica, Winniki, and as far as Kołomyja. These churches were built between 1738 and 1759 by Bernard Meretyn, a Lwów architect. In the field of Rococo ecclesiastical architecture, Lwów occupied a place of paramount importance, just as Warsaw in that of palaces. The Wilno group was different in character, using pure Baroque and Rococo forms but not to be classed as Rococo architecture proper. Both in details and proportions it has something different, something not seen elsewhere. The proportions of some of the Wilno churches are more slender than any others since medieval times, and there is something quite Gothic in these mid-eighteenth-century churches, as witness the very typical church of the Missionary Fathers in Wilno. Their towers are most original, exceedingly slender and narrow, split up into many storeys, composed of small columns, with open-work towards the top. Flat surfaces and straight lines have been removed as far as possible; the façades are curved and bent as if from some soft material. Most of the orifices, cornices and columns have specific shapes not seen in other structures. Their interiors are

embellished by a system of altars, connected with each other and embracing the whole edifice. A specific style, incomparably richer than that of the façade, was created for these altars, with a wealth of innumerable motifs. The closest analogy might be found in Southern Germany. Probably there was some connection with German models, but these were radically transformed during the process. Interesting relics of this kind are scattered around and beyond the district of Wilno. The credit for the earlier Wilno churches is due to the architect John Christopher Glaubitz, who worked in that region during the years 1738-67.

Painting and carving developed chiefly in connection with that form of ecclesiastical architecture which requires rich decoration. The entirety of the churches, even in the provinces, were polychromed. Monks specialized in wall-painting: Luke Hübel in the churches of the Piarist Order; Valentine Zebrowski in the Benedictine churches; and in Lwów are the outstanding polychromes of Stanislas Stroiński.

Czechowicz and Konicz, the most eminent painters of that epoch, were, virtually, solely painters of religious motifs. Both Cracovians, they studied art at Rome under Carlo Maratta. Simon Czechowicz (1689-1775) later resided and worked at Cracow, Warsaw, Wilno and elsewhere in Poland, embellishing churches all over Poland with his altar-pieces of which there were some hundreds; serious in purpose and imbued with spiritual feeling, they were none the less most academic in form and fully typical of the period. Thaddeus Konicz, or Kuntze, was younger and more independent, his colour was brighter and more animated, and he treated his subjects with broader and larger-scale handling. Besides religious themes he gladly produced allegorical pictures, and ended his days in Spain as court painter. The painters attached to residences of the aristocracy were mostly portraitists, such as Sylvester Myris, the court painter of the Branickis at Białystok.

Sculpture and wood-carving carried more weight than painting. Every church, new and old, had carved wooden figures of the Saints which embellished the altars. The images were of various levels of merit; the most beautiful were in Lwów, which was a great centre for the wood-carvers. The best known are the studies in the Dominican church in Lwów, but there are some of no less worth in other churches in the same city, in Horodnica, Buczacz, Dukla, Tarnopol, Leżajsk, Zbaraż, Monasterzyska, etc. The most eminent woodworkers in Lwów were Fezinger, Pinzel, Osiński, and the Polejowski brothers; in Warsaw, Charles Bay and George Plersch, whose statues are distinguished

by unusual force of expression. This power of expression was due to their radical irrealism, fantastic proportions, and remarkable deformations. This applies with particular force to their ascetic and ecstatic figures of monks, which seem like carved correspondences with Magnasco's works. The female figures, on the other hand, were marked by great charm and by superlative and real eighteenth-century elegance. The only analogies to these figures are those of the Bavarian carvings, and some connection can in fact be pre-supposed. Nevertheless, the Polish figures surpass the Bavarian in expressive force and in elegance.

The decorative art of Poland in the eighteenth century was largely under the influence of the East. This applies in particular to carpets and waistbands. The former were manufactured in South-eastern Poland. The most famous works were at Brody and remained in operation throughout virtually the whole of the century, at first as the property of the powerful Koniecpolski family and later as that of the Polish generalissimo, Hetman Potocki. The so-called Polish silken carpets, interwoven with thread of gold and silver and amongst the most prized carpets in the world, were produced in the East for the Polish market.

Woven waistbands, in rich patterns and designs, began to be worn in Poland in the seventeenth century, but they were originally imported from Persia and Stamboul through Lwów. Armenians established special factories in Stamboul in the eighteenth century to manufacture waistbands for Poland, and soon transferred their workshops to Poland itself. Waistband factories arose in every part of the Commonwealth, the most famous being those at Kobylka (near Warsaw), at Cracow, at Stanisławów, and at Stuck, in Eastern Poland. The beautiful and interesting designs were culled from Turkish fabrics, Persian and even Chinese products, although adapted to suit Polish tastes.

The manufacture of swords, saddles and bridles prospered exceedingly up to the middle of the century, especially in Lwów. All were fashioned in the oriental style. At the same time, other divisions of the decorative arts, ecclesiastical particularly, and goldsmith's work above all, were rather of the Western European type and most closely approached the products of the German and Italian craftsmen.

#### THE CLASSICISM OF KING STANISLAS AUGUSTUS

When King Stanislas Augustus ascended the throne in 1764, the organization of art and its style were at once radically changed. After the Saxon period, during which art was deprived of the care of the royal court and of the State, came the high patronage of Stanislas

Augustus, inaugurating a period which surpassed the patronage of the arts under the last of the Jagellons, of Sigismund III, and John III Sobieski.

The newly elected King built incessantly and with remarkable solicitude for an adequate artistic level down to the smallest details. It can even be said that the affairs of art, in spite of the troublous political times and the serious economic situation, were at the head of the list of matters occupying the court. The enormous amount of labour and painstaking effort bestowed by the King and his retinue on matters connected with art can be gauged by the masses of special records handed down to our days, and by the high place at court given to artists.

The King employed every eminent artist in the country regardless of his nationality. Some he even summoned from abroad. Amongst those who achieved world-wide fame and came to Poland were such court painters as Lampi, Kraft, Pillement and Belotto-Canaletto. Others, such as Casanova, Piranesi, Füger and Canova, remained in their own countries but executed works ordered by Stanislas Augustus. The predominance of the Dresdeners came to an end, and artists from the whole world gathered at the court of Warsaw.

Artistic life was given distinct juridical forms. Building matters were administered by a special commission consisting of artists and technicians—an organization unknown before, which outstripped even present times. The lead was assumed by a man who had the competence and authority of a minister of art—Marcello Bacciarelli, an Italian painter, the friend and confidant of the King. The director of the Department of Sculpture and Carving was the court sculptor, Lebrun, the talented pupil of Pigalle, whilst the Department of Building Works was entrusted to the court architects, first to Fontana and later to Merlini.

In this organized realm of art, Stanislas Augustus was the constitutional monarch, important by reason of his tireless initiative and constant supervision over the works under construction. He selected the artists himself. Brought up under the influence of French culture, he began to utilize the services of French artists, but it soon became evident that the Italians suited him better, and these in conjunction with Polish workers constituted the artistic staff of the royal court during most of the reign. The high level of the art of that period must also be ascribed to the King, who supervised even the smallest details, and is all the more worthy of stress in that his means were restricted.

The King was likewise a skilled and experienced collector. His

gallery (scattered after his death) was large and full of valuable canvases which included many works by Rembrandt. He commenced a collection of statuary and carvings: he imported casts of the greatest Greek works. Still more interesting is the fact that he planned to organize a "modern museum"—a concept which passed beyond the customs of the eighteenth century. He appreciated not only the great works of bygone times but also those of living artists; for instance, one of Fragonard's best works, *Le baiser dérobé*, was acquired by him (it was later seized by the Russian authorities and has not yet been restored to Poland). The King also had a large collection of gems and miniatures. But the most important was his collection of engravings, one of the largest in Europe, which even to-day is of impressive size.

Stanislas Augustus also planned from the first year of his reign a school of fine art. He engaged foreign artists to work in Poland as instructors. His intentions were not fully realized, but he did establish a school at the royal palace manned by a staff of competent teachers of painting, sculpture and architecture, and endowed with its own budgetary funds, scholarships, specially lighted halls, a collection of plaster casts and engravings, and a library.

The studies of young art-students and artists in Poland were supplemented by visits to other countries for further instruction. Holders of royal scholarships went abroad in a steady stream during the whole reign, and the King personally investigated their progress. Eminent names in Polish art appear on the list of scholarship holders, the most famous being the architect Kamsetzer and the painters Smuglewicz and Kucharski.

Stanislas Augustus had broad views on art: he not only lent his support to the fine arts, but also to applied arts and crafts. During the first few years of his rule, he imported fabrics and bronzes from Paris, but in later times the needs of the court were in even greater measure satisfied by the production of the workshops established in the country itself. The King founded the porcelain works near Warsaw which produced works of great merit (particularly the well-known Belvedere vases) ranking amongst the best products of ceramic art in the eighteenth century. Tyzenhaus, the Under-Treasurer of State, conducted a weaving-mill and carpet works on the royal estate near Grodno and produced goods of great artistic worth.

It is therefore no exaggeration to state that the royal court was like a great well-organized artistic workshop. It was probably the last artistic royal court in Europe, based on Renaissance conditions. It was the last instance of a monarch assembling artists at his court and,

uniting them for a common object, of royal solicitude and protection over the art of the whole State, of the King ruling over the artistic taste of his people, the leader and mentor of its young generations of artists.

The influence of the King's court radiated all over the country. Prince Adam Czartoryski, Princess Elizabeth Lubomirska, Princess Helen Radziwiłł, and others too numerous to mention, collected works of art, built palaces, and imported artists; the best private collections in Poland, such as the Czartoryski Collection in Cracow and the Potocki Collection at Łańcut, originated at that period. Many private porcelain and ceramic works were set up and, although the Polish costume was no longer worn, the number of mills producing the ornate waistbands increased greatly.

Stanislas Augustus was also instrumental in changing the style of art. He was a decided adherent of the Classical style, which under him ousted Rococo within a surprisingly short time. His artistic taste had been formed during his stay in France, and his reign began under the preponderant influence of the style of Louis Quatorze. In this style Victor Louis, the great French architect, planned to reconstruct the royal palace in Warsaw. Fontana and Schröger, both Polish architects, became imbued with it: the first rooms decorated by the former in the King's palace and his first few pavilions in the Łazienki Park in Warsaw were typical in this respect.

But it soon appeared that the moderate French Classical style was too insipid and petty to suit Stanislas Augustus. He prized more highly architecture which was more powerful, monumental and colourful. He found the Italian architects and some of the local artists better adapted to meet his requirements, and placed his trust in D. Merlini as his architect, J. Kamsetzer as his decorator, and Bacciarelli as his painter. By 1780, a Polish Classical style was fully fledged: it is known as Stanislavian Classicism and was justly named after the reigning monarch. The Łazienki palace, then on the outskirts of the city, and the principal interiors of the royal palace are the most typical monuments of this style. The monumentality and colourful picturesqueness of this style betrayed something of the Baroque, but on the other hand it surpassed the Empire style, which sprang up from the same architectural feeling and trends, although a quarter of a century younger.

The Stanislavian style was not the only form of contemporary Classicism current in Poland. A more radical form ruled in Wilno: a practical Classicism which sought to lead architecture back to the

models of Ancient Greece. The initiator of this movement in Poland was W. Gucewicz (1753-98), a pupil of Soufflot and Ledoux, the French exponents of the Classical style. He reconstructed the old city hall and cathedral in Wilno along the lines of the temples of antiquity, and introduced the same spirit into the new buildings he erected in that city.

Painting and sculpture during the epoch of Stanislas Augustus did not fall under the influence of Classicism in such measure as did architecture, decoration, furniture, and the artistic handicrafts. The only change was an abandonment of Baroque schematic forms, and a simplification and tranquillization of form.

The role of the two arts was unequal. The court sculptors, the Frenchman A. Lebrun, the Italians Monaldi and Righi, and the Pole Pinck produced a number of good works, particularly the decorative figures in the Łazienki palace and the portrait busts housed in the royal palace, but Poland did not respond. Painting, however, passed through a period of regeneration in Poland and inaugurated a current which led directly to the greatest Polish artists of the nineteenth century.

Among the painters invited to Poland were Bernardo Belotto, also known as Canaletto, who remained in Warsaw until his death, and lived to complete a series of engravings and beautiful canvases depicting the Warsaw of his times. J. Pillement's wall-paintings and decorations have not survived. But Bacciarelli's great, rather academic decorative compositions are still in the royal residence, with a number of his portraits, justly prized for their powerful expression and beautiful golden tones. J. Lampi and Grassi, whose stay in Poland was shorter, were also painters of portraits. Of the Polish artists, mostly taught their art through the King's munificence, P. Smuglewicz (1745-1807) reached the heights of a painter of great compositions of near-Classical type on religious and antique themes. Sixty of his drawings were published as engravings in Rome under the title of *Terme di Tito*. His brother, A. Smuglewicz, was a prominent decorative artist, whose wall-paintings of landscapes and architectural motifs embellished scores of Polish palaces. The best portrait painters were J. F. Pitschman (1758-1834), who studied at the Vienna Academy of Art, and K. Woźniakowski (1771-1812), whose artistic instruction had been in Warsaw. J. P. Norblin (1745-1830), the French painter at the court of Prince C. Czartoryski, played probably even a greater role than the royal artists. He did not restrict himself to great compositions, but found themes in Polish landscapes and views, people and events, which he depicted in a large number of drawings in such

direct and realistic fashion that his work is still unequalled in Poland. Two of his pupils, A. Orłowski and M. Płoński, soon became the leaders in their field.

The art of the period of Stanislas Augustus was not only of high merit in itself: it also yielded abundant fruit during subsequent generations. It furnished the beginnings of Polish realistic painting. It also gave new life to its architectural forms. During his reign, 'virtually only palaces were built in the Classical style, but the next generation applied it to the manor-houses, even to the simplest and most modest. The classical manor-house with its verandah on columns became as universal and inherent a part of Polish architecture and of the whole landscape of Poland as the Baroque churches of the countryside.



## CHAPTER X

### A. NAPOLEON AND POLAND

TO an imaginative and ambitious young soldier, who by 1795 had experienced the rapid ups and downs of the French Revolution, the terrible fall of Poland from the glories of the reign of Sobieski to the disasters of that of Stanislas must have made an irresistible appeal. The interest of Napoleon Bonaparte in history early converged on the tragedies of nations; but in his fragmentary early correspondence no reference to her dire fate occurs until, in his letter of 12 July 1795, he writes to his brother Joseph: "The North is embroiled in disputes, and hope is rising in Poland." Then straightway he recurs to the cynical thoughts ever haunting him, such as enrichment out of the misfortunes of the French, who are now a prey to an outburst of luxury and sexual passion—"Men are mad about women and think and live only for them." Thus, amidst the debasements of 1795, the Poles kindle in him a gleam of hope. Fallacious though it was, it presaged a mighty episode of his career, their temporary restoration to greatness as guardians of East Central Europe.

Enthusiasm for Rousseau had early led him to study the Swiss philosopher's sympathetic treatise on Poland, written shortly before the First Partition, of 1772. Indeed, all friends of liberty raged at that robbery by Prussia, Russia and Austria. Accordingly, from his boyhood Napoleon detested those three Powers and hoped for the revival of Poland, which then progressed *pari passu* with that of France. Both peoples had suffered from an effete monarchism utterly unable to reform itself or the ills of the nation. Stanislas in Poland, like Louis XVI in France, was a mere cipher; but the helplessness of both monarchs finally drove their peoples to demand popular government as the only means of escaping from bankruptcy, social chaos, and political ruin. In 1788 the Poles demanded the meeting of their old Diet, while the French clamoured for that of their old States General. At first, Warsaw outstripped Paris; for the Diet reassembled in October 1788, i.e. seven months before the States General met at Versailles. But soon the latter took the lead, becoming a democratic National Assembly; while the Diet, hampered by Russian and class intrigues, accomplished no drastic reform.

The example of France, however, stimulated the Poles; and in 1791 their long Diet vied with the French second National Assembly

of that year in carrying speedily a sweeping constitutional reform, headed by the Rousseauite motto: "All power in a State emanates from the will of the nation." That principle inspired both of the new constitutions of the year 1791, which sharply curtailed the prerogatives of the kings and the political powers and social priority of the noble and privileged classes. The young Napoleon, still at the acme of his Jacobinical zeal, must have admired the Polish effort, which paved the way for that of September at Paris.

In one important sphere it excelled the French experiment. For while the former strengthened the powers of the Polish executive, the jealous constitution-mongers of Paris so far weakened theirs as to play into the hands of anarchic political clubs. Accordingly, in his work, *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, Edmund Burke declared that the French constitution unchained anarchy while that of the Poles repressed it. Also the growing contempt of Napoleon for the Parisian populace led him to prefer the Polish constitution.

Very singular was the sequel. Defects at Paris prepared the way for his military dictatorship; while the improved prospects at Warsaw provoked the forcible intervention of Catherine, thereby leading on to the Second Partition. Skilfully the Tsarina had used events in France to this end. For in the spring of 1792 when the strongly republican Girondin Ministry came to power and brought about acute friction with Austria and Prussia, she resolved to "push on the Courts of Vienna and Berlin to intervene in French affairs so as to give her elbow-room in her own enterprises"—primarily in Poland.

Her underhand moves against the Vistula weakened the efforts of the two Germanic Powers beyond the Rhine. For they prized Polish lands more than the restoration of monarchy in France. The outcome was the secret Russo-Prussian bargain of January 1793 for the Second Partition of Poland, which soon took effect, with the connivance of Austria. Both the French and British Governments could have opposed this step, had not their rupture of 1 February crippled all outside efforts. Accordingly, the spoliation of Poland went on unchecked save by tripartite strivings which weakened the war against France and saved her Revolution.

In 1794 the gallant efforts of the Poles under the inspiring lead of Kościuszko aroused keen sympathy among the French, but also spurred on Catherine to wipe out the last relics of Polish power. Hence the bargainings for the Third Partition (completed in October 1795), in preparation for which Prussia had in July made peace with France. Again, then, the French Republic benefited greatly by an

event which diverted monarchical efforts from the Rhine to the Vistula. Thus, the French were able early in 1796 to push on strong offensives against Austria, now practically the only ally of England; for in October 1796 Spain declared war on the Island Power.

In these vigorous moves Napoleon both designed and executed the most brilliant and successful effort, that of expelling the Hapsburg armies from Italy. There he had help from about 5000 Polish volunteers, who saw in him a potential liberator of their land.

At Verona, in September 1796, Napoleon uttered these prophetic words: "I like the Poles. The Partition of Poland was an iniquitous deed that cannot stand. When I have finished the war in Italy, I will lead the French myself and will force the Russians to re-establish Poland."

Yet his brilliant successes, which, in February 1797, led him to Ancona, turned his thoughts towards Corfu, Turkey, Egypt and India. From a Caesar he now became an Alexander. On 16 August 1797 he wrote to the French Directory that the Ionian Isles were of more interest to France than the whole of Italy; and the time would soon come when France must seize Egypt "in order to destroy England". Thus his views, which had centred on overthrowing Austrian power in Italy, ended by becoming world-wide.

This maritime transformation of his aims totally eclipsed the Polish Question, though the Polish Legion had fought valiantly for him in Italy. Great must have been their disgust when, in the autumn of 1797, he (almost in defiance of the French Directory) patched up peace with beaten Austria on terms which included the partition with her of the Venetian Republic. She thereby acquired a large part of Venetia, while France gained the Venetian fleet and the Ionian Isles—the stepping-stones towards the Orient. The extinction of that once great Republic sullied the reputation of the conqueror who, in the spring of 1796, had styled himself "the liberator of Italy". Could he ever again be trusted to liberate Poland?

Yet, after escaping from "conquered" Egypt, he overthrew with ease the dull civilian Directors, and soon resumed his efforts in Italy against the lately successful Austrians. Thereupon thousands of Poles flocked to his victorious standards and helped him again to drive the hated enemy from Italy. The sequel was tragic. When he patched up with Austria the disappointing peace of 1801 his aims once more turned seawards, to the detriment of Polish aspirations. For he now despatched to San Domingo the Polish Legion in order to assist the French in recovering that once wealthy island from the revolting

negroes. The effort cost the lives of nearly all the Poles by yellow fever; and the island was lost to France.

After this second terrible disillusionment, is it surprising that Polish hopes in Napoleon died down and even turned eastwards? For now a reforming and sympathetic Tsar sought to win over and help the Poles. The aspirations of Alexander I differed *in toto* from those of his grandmother Catherine, and his father, Paul. First of all modern European sovereigns, he sought in 1804 to establish a general peace on a just basis, viz. "the sacred rights of humanity". So glorious a programme called for equal enthusiasm and skill in those troublous years. For the grievances of dismembered Poland were still acute. Moreover, by their treaties with Austria and England in 1801-2, the French had secured not only their "natural frontiers" but also control over all neighbouring States, and hegemony in the Mediterranean. When the latter problem brought about war with England in May 1803, Napoleon had at his disposal practically all Southern, Western and Central Europe. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1804 Alexander sanctioned the discussion with Great Britain of a very remarkable scheme. He urged her to mitigate her maritime code. *Per contra* they would limit the power of France by reasserting the liberties of the Italian, Swiss, German, Belgian and Dutch peoples now under her control. He also urged Great Britain to help him to draw up a system of International Law for the guidance of all European States. These were also to use their united force to prevent the infraction of European peace. To this generous and far-reaching programme his Foreign Minister, the Polish Prince Czartoryski, added a secret Memorandum urging that Alexander should become King of a reconstructed Poland, comprising all her lately partitioned lands, while Prussia and Austria were to find compensations in the West. Whether this Memorandum had the entire approval of Alexander is not certain. But he sympathized with Polish aspirations and sought to meet them wherever practicable.

Quitting the sphere of ideal schemes for prosaic actualities, we note that during the war of 1803-14 with Napoleon, Great Britain became the Sea Power, while he more and more subjected the coasts of the Continent. In June 1805 he annexed the Ligurian (Genoese) Republic to the French Empire. This last step forced Austria and Russia to take up arms and soon to form with Great Britain the great Third Coalition. Thus again his resolve fully to use the naval resources of Italy spread the war over most of Europe.

The sequel is well known. At Ulm and Austerlitz (October-December-

ber 1805) Napoleon overthrew the Austrian and Austro-Russian armies, thereby compelling those Powers to accept his terms, which however, included no change as to their recent Polish gains. Further, he had successfully kept Prussia neutral, when she might have struck decisively at his rear. But in 1806, after cowing Russia and gaining complete control over Germany and Italy, he adopted towards the third partitioning Power a masterful attitude which brought about hostilities leading on quickly to Jena and the occupation of nearly all Prussian lands. Thereupon the Poles, with levies from Lithuania, rose against the Prussian garrisons and drove them from Kalisz and other towns in Great Poland, while the French captured its capital, Poznań. These events presaged a Franco-Polish union which might reverse all the Partitions—a hope speedily animating all classes of Poles, nobles and serfs, Christians and Jews alike. Indeed, after Napoleon entered Poznań in triumph, he wrote to Cambacérès (1 December 1806): "The whole of Poland is arming. It is hard to conceive the national movement in this country. The most ardent are the rich. Priests, nobles, peasants, all are of one mind. Poland will soon have 60,000 men under arms." But on the same day, he wrote to General Andréossy, his ambassador at Vienna: "...Priests, nobles, peasants, all are soldiers. It is not in my power to prevent this national explosion." The last phrase is significant; for, as the war with Prussia and Russia was not ended, he desired to keep Austria quiet, and he added: "While favouring the insurrection of the Prussian and Russian Polands, I will in no way meddle with Austrian Poland." Thus his Polish sympathies were strictly limited by military considerations—a fact which explains a phrase in his official bulletin of that same date: "Will the Polish throne be re-established, and will this great nation regain its life and independence?...God alone, who holds in his hands the combinations of all events, is the arbiter of this great political problem." By this unusually religious utterance he doubtless intended to reassure the Hapsburg court. Here he succeeded in part, for Austria remained neutral during the campaign of 1807. But the suspicion arose at Vienna that his guiding aim was to revive her old rivalry with Prussia and Russia; for Andréossy informed Talleyrand that Austria would temporize and make no definite engagement.

This cautious attitude of Napoleon deepened the suspicions of some leading Poles, notably Kościuszko. In vain was Fouché urged to give him all the money he needed. The Polish patriot had long distrusted the Emperor. "Do not think (he said to a friend) that he will restore Poland: he thinks only of himself. He hates every great

nationality and still more the spirit of independence. He is a tyrant, and his only aim is to satisfy his own ambition. I am sure he will create nothing durable." When Napoleon demanded what were his desires for Poland he specified them thus: (1) a government organized like that of England; (2) the Polish peasants to be free and also the owners of the lands on which they worked; (3) Polish frontiers stretching from Riga to Odessa, and from Danzig to Hungary. Such demands were of course inadmissible, and no more notice was taken of this *intransigent*. The distrust of all independent thinkers for Napoleon was natural. How could the author of the Partition of the Venetian Republic (largely to the gain of Austria) be expected to act disinterestedly on behalf of the Polish people? Thrice had he profited by the valour of a Polish legion, yet at the peace had done nothing for the Poles. Would not the same tragic finale again occur?

He himself distrusted many of the Polish enthusiasts. Thus on 2 December 1806, he wrote to Murat (then Grand Duc de Berg), at Warsaw, urging caution. For "those who, before declaring themselves, demand so many guarantees, are egoists uninflamed by love of country. I am old in my knowledge of men. My greatness is not founded on the help of a few thousand Poles. It is for them to profit enthusiastically by existing facts: it is not for me to take the first step. Let them show a firm resolve to win their independence...and then I shall see what I have to do." Was there ever a more cautious liberator?

Nevertheless, on 2 January 1807, when he entered Warsaw in triumph, that much-suffering capital revelled in the hopes of complete independence. For now it transpired that Turkey and Persia were attacking Russia, and most Poles trusted Napoleon's recent promise, through Berthier, to General Davoût (a fervid admirer of their nation) that he would proclaim its independence if they provided him with 40,000 good troops. True, he gave them no definite guarantees; and some of their leaders placed more trust in Prince Czartoryski's efforts to convert the Tsar to a decisive pro-Polish policy. On 5 December 1800 he had presented to him a *Mémoire sur la Nécessité de rétablir la Pologne pour prévenir Bonaparte*, by becoming King of a reunited Poland. Alexander, however, declined to embark on a policy which would offend both Austria and Prussia.

Thus, he as well as Napoleon discerned the complexities of the Polish problem. Each side put forth efforts to attract the masses to fight, but gave no definite pledge as to the creation of a united Kingdom of Poland. The one aim in common was to form a Polish barrier

against the enemy. Such is the eternal difficulty besetting a "barrier race". Its ostensible "benefactors" view the future chiefly from the military standpoint. That such was the point of view of Napoleon appears from hints in his *Correspondance* at the end of 1806. After his victory over the Russians at Pultusk, he wrote thence twice on that day to the artful Minister Fouché at Paris. In one letter he thanked him for what he had done on behalf of a forthcoming work by de Rulhière, *Histoire des Révolutions de Pologne*. Fouché must have written to him concerning the political impotence of the Poles before and during the Partitions. For the Emperor longed to see proofs of this in the finished work, and he added the significant comment that "it is policy, apart from real crimes, which leads to catastrophes". Obviously, he viewed the Polish problem objectively. For in the second letter to Fouché he sniffed at Kościuszko because "he wants to remain quiet". What Napoleon demanded was action, strong self-sacrificing action, on his behalf.

This game of diplomatic angling for Polish "*chair de canon*" turned strongly in his favour. He made practical use of the fervour at Warsaw by organizing a large force of Poles (including *une levée noble*), part of which was to advance forthwith and help in the siege of Graudenz. As to supplies, he at once confiscated for the army all the wine in Warsaw; and he soon had 6,000,000 francs *en caisse*. On the 14th he set up a provisional government of seven Polish members, who were soon to be nicknamed "the seven sleeping brethren".

Meanwhile, Warsaw found herself once more; for the Emperor entered with zest into all the brilliant festivities that greeted her renaissance; and few Poles, save the aged husband, resented his wooing of the lovely young Countess Walewska, reinforced as it was by his assurance, on 12 January 1807, that Poland "will become more dear to me if you have pity on my poor heart". (The birth of a son to them was to be hailed as setting the seal on that vow.) As for Josephine, he, on 23 January, forbade her to come that long and miry journey to Warsaw. "Return to Paris: and there be gay and happy. Perhaps I shall soon be there."

His deep and lengthy preoccupations were all in the East. He now regarded Warsaw as one of the great centres of European policy, second only to Constantinople. For, while the renaissance of the Poles threatened Prussia, that of the Turks under Selim was a serious menace to Russia. Indeed, for a time he contemplated the project of uniting a Greater Poland with the Turkish Empire so as to form a

vast barrier against Russia and a means of cowing both Austria and Prussia. And surely a Franco-Italian-Polish-Turkish League (having the support of Switzerland, South and West Germany and the Netherlands) would have dominated the Continent. But this grand scheme remained vague. As Vandal has well remarked: "What Napoleon always wanted from the eastern regions was a means of breaking the concert of our enemies." This was a smaller scheme and on the old lines. For the three partitioning Powers were at secret feud over the future of Poland and Turkey; and to foment their rivalries seemed easy.

On the whole, he decided to follow the course which the campaign of 1807 would open out. For no military genius had appeared on the hostile side. When the Polish levies were ready he pressed on the mud-clogged moves, gaining some skirmishes and much ground until the long and sanguinary Battle of Eylau brought a pause (8 February). It was a Pyrrhic victory; for his very heavy losses were rendered doubly serious by the distance, far from a base. The general headquarters were now to be at Thorn (Toruń); and the Russian retreat beyond the River Pregel allowed his army again to go into winter quarters between the rivers Passarge and Vistula.

More than ever did he now need all possible support from the Poles. This they accorded. But, late in February, he decided to replace Maret, his too Polonophil Minister at Warsaw, by Talleyrand. This astute diplomat was certain to balance all his words and deeds with wary foresight; for, "as a good European he detested the Poles, in spite of his good relations with some of them". He also furthered Napoleon's policy of extreme caution as regards Austrian Poland, and rejoiced at the Emperor's belief that the Hapsburgs now favoured him. Talleyrand of course upheld his policy—"se servir d'eux, sans les servir".

During four months after Eylau the outlook was befogged by the uncertainties of the military situation. To Talleyrand he complained on 2 April of Austria's slowness in meeting his offers for a close *entente*. Prussia also paid little heed to his promise, late in February, to restore all her conquered territories, also to summon a general Congress for pacification with her, Russia, and even with England. Naturally, his enemies attributed this offer to a desire to gain time for bringing up reinforcements and fully organizing the Polish forces. Highly significant was his statement in the Army Bulletin of 9 April as to the French siege of Danzig: "The siege artillery is beginning to arrive."



Accordingly, Russia and Prussia pushed on military preparations and urged England to act with more energy. As for the Poles, ought not Alexander to become their King? So thought the Russian leaders, while Hardenberg, chief Minister of Prussia, proposed to transfer the King of Saxony to Poland. Also, on 26 April, Russia and Prussia solidified their alliance by the Convention of Bartenstein, aiming at the expulsion of the French from Germany. The future of Poland was left vague, though Alexander promised that Prussia's losses should be made good while she gained "*un arrondissement*" to improve her frontier. This would almost certainly be at the expense of Poland. The allies further sought to draw in Austria. But she temporized, awaiting the events of the forthcoming campaign.

Thereby she avenged on the Prussians their dallying policy before Austerlitz. For on 14 June Napoleon overthrew the Russo-Prussian army by the mighty blow of Friedland, which he hailed as "the sister of Marengo, Austerlitz and Jena". Its results were certainly equal to theirs; it both ended the war and changed the face of Europe. For the Poles it counted more than all three earlier victories, seeing that Napoleon now won over the Tsar, partly by raving at England, also by tempting him with partition of the Turkish Empire.

Turkey's potential loss was Poland's immediate gain. For now Alexander's surrender to Napoleon led to what was in effect a dismemberment of Prussia. In the Treaties of Tilsit (signed on 7 July, ratified on the 9th) Frederick William II had to recognize Napoleon's creation, the Duchy of Warsaw, which was now by Article V established at the expense of Prussia. The Duchy was to be ruled by Napoleon's ally, the King of Saxony, on terms "assuring the liberties and privileges of the peoples of the Duchy". Also Danzig and its environs now became a Free City, the free navigation of the Vistula being stipulated (Arts. 6, 8). Moreover, Prussia had to cede the district of Białystok to Russia, which not only gave up to Napoleon the Ionian Isles and Cattaro, but also recalled her fleet from the Mediterranean. As Danzig was soon virtually controlled by Napoleon, he gained the use of the best port on the south coast of the Baltic; also full control of the Adriatic.

The consequences of the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw were considerable. And they created enough satisfaction to lead to a considerable increase of the Polish army. As Czartoryski wrote—"several persons gave up the whole of their property for its maintenance. Six regiments...were raised and placed on a war footing entirely by four individuals in a few weeks. Those who were less rich supplied

battalions, companies or smaller bodies of men....Some had to sell their family plate, jewels, and even wedding rings."

Nevertheless, Napoleon by the Convention of Dresden (22 July 1807) reduced almost to *nil* the powers of Frederick Augustus, now Duke of Warsaw, who was bound to listen to the advice of the French Resident at Warsaw, and to support a contingent of 30,000 Poles, placed under the immediate control of Marshal Davoût. Indeed the last word in Polish affairs rested with Napoleon. Thus, on 31 March 1808 he wrote urging Davoût "to maintain the utmost possible harmony with the Russians and hold in check your Poles who are hot-heads". On the whole, it is doubtful whether the Poles benefited by Napoleon's control so much as has often been claimed.

Of course he could not satisfy their extremists. How could he demand from his new friend and ally, Alexander, the cession of a large slice from the vast gains of Russia in the three Partitions? He could work his will on Frederick William, now at his feet, not on the Tsar, whom he had to tempt to forgo all trade with England, Russia's best customer.<sup>1</sup> At bottom, it was Napoleon's severe Continental System which decided both the chief terms and the working of the Treaty of Tilsit, just as, five years later, it was that still severe System which brought about the Franco-Russian rupture, to the ruin ultimately of Napoleon and of Poland.

First, however, it was the turn of Austria to feel Napoleon's mailed fist. In 1808 he sought to force on her the Continental System. Encouraged by the Spanish National Rising, she defied him, in the hope of gaining support from Prussia and Russia. But they, remembering 1807, left the Hapsburgs to shift for themselves. Disunion again spelt defeat. Wagram was the counterpart to Jena and Friedland. But Poland now gained only Western Galicia and Cracow, in all about 900 square miles.

After wedding Marie Louise, Archduchess of Austria, Napoleon relied on the support of that Power—a *motif* which hardened his relations both to the Tsar Alexander and to Polish nationalists, who had hoped for a grander Poland. He was also disgusted that the Poles raised, but did not pay for, 42,000 troops. Far more were needed in 1812 in order to hold in check Russia, now resenting fiercely the hardships involved by his harsher Continental System. When these brought about the rupture of June 1812 with Russia and

<sup>1</sup> See his long letter of 4 July 1807 to Alexander (*Corresp.* No. 12,849), trying to persuade him that Franco-Russian commercial relations were highly favourable. So they had been. But after Tilsit, and especially after 1810, they menaced Russia with bankruptcy.

Sweden, Polish Nationalists hoped for a complete reconstruction of their ancient kingdom. Again their hopes were vain. True, Napoleon had on 28 May sketched the outline of a great self-governing Confederation including all formerly Polish lands, though with some reservations as to the districts still under Austria. And he sought to incite the raising of a great Polish "insurrection", for which he ordered 66,000 muskets to be stored at Elbing or Thorn. Also at Wilno on 14 July he praised a representative Polish deputation for the patriotic efforts of their people against Russia, but added that he had guaranteed to Austria the possession of all her states. This disappointing statement palsied their remaining efforts. In truth, the Austrian marriage and its sequel rendered impossible what would have been the best possible scheme of campaign, viz. whole-hearted action against Russia by all Poles and Lithuanians, as well as by Turks. Winter quarters on the upper Dnieper would then have been feasible.

The sequel is well known. Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow and the still direr sequel were the sentence of death both to him and to Poland. Politically, 1812 hurled her back to the age of the Partitions. Yet her virtual effacement in 1814-15 did not involve extinction. For now her people differed widely from the divided and deadened classes which invited the First Partition. Thanks to the French Revolution and Napoleon, they were of one mind and of a high spirit. Her troops, like those of Italy, had learnt to conquer Austrians, Prussians and Russians—exploits which threw beams of light on the dark days that were to follow. Also the application of the leading principles of the *Code Napoléon* had tended to unify her people. Nationality, on which Napoleon had trampled in Germany, Spain and Russia, was by him vivified in Poland. And her future reunion, though deferred for a century, was to reveal the lasting influence of Napoleon's inspiration.

True, his world-policy had inflicted on the Poles terrible losses in men and money. During the Italian campaigns their legions often bore the brunt of hardships and death—for no tangible gain. Still worse was their fate in San Domingo and Spain. For there they hated his war policy. In June 1811 Czartoryski thus characterized the attitude of the Poles towards the Peninsular War: "They condemn his policy as others do; they pity the Spaniards, and are ashamed to be obliged to fight against them; but no nation can be expected to commit suicide in order that other nations can be benefited. The Poles regret the necessity of their being attached to Napoleon's fortunes, but they cannot refuse benefits at his hands which are not offered

them by anyone else. They have done everything to prove their ardent wish to owe their national existence to the Emperor Alexander; but he has rejected all their overtures." Exaggerated though the last statement is, yet undoubtedly Napoleon was the only ruler who acted vigorously on behalf of the resuscitation of Poland. His motives in so doing are not above suspicion; for, many times over, he gained more from her troops than he conceded to her. Even so, however, his acts on her behalf far exceeded those of any other sovereign.

Unfortunately, his policy towards other states was so harsh and provocative as to prejudice them against the Poles—a fact which goes far to explain the tergiversation of Alexander. In truth, the Napoleonic world policy, consummated in his Continental System, turned nearly the whole of Europe against France, and therefore against her easternmost base, Poland. By the summer of 1813 the three partitioning Powers were resolved to overthrow the Napoleonic Empire and its annexes. Among these, Poland and Italy suffered the hardest fate. But so severe was their lot that it could not endure, with the memory of the Napoleonic glories always working against partition and towards reunion.

## B. POLISH MILITARY EFFORT IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

**I**T was a fact full of deep historical importance that at the moment when the partitioning Powers notified (July 1797) at an assembly of the German Reichstag in Ratisbon the abolition of the Polish State for ever and of everything that might recall it, a restored Polish army was already under arms, and answered the sentence of extermination with a song which was to become the national anthem of the Poles: "Poland has not died while we yet live." The dramatic knot of the history of the nation after the partitions had been tied.

The last army of the Commonwealth ceased to exist after the catastrophe of the insurrection. Its officers and soldiers remained. Many of them were incorporated by the usurpers into their armies. Strict data are lacking. According to approximate calculations (Skałkowski) 20,000 men crossed the Austrian frontier at the close of the insurrection. The majority were equipped with Austrian uniforms and sent to the Rhine and to Italy against France. The Prussians gained about 3000 privates from war prisoners or through recruiting agents. From the 15,000 who were taken prisoners by the Russians, 10,000 of the bravest were forced to serve in the Russian army. In all, more than 30,000 Polish soldiers passed into the service of the three partitioning Powers. Tens of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of officers were dispersed over the country, especially in the old and new Galicia. In 1794 a considerable concentration of Polish ex-service men was formed on Ottoman border territory in Moldavia and the district of Chocim, and Brigadier Denisko, who forced his way there from Volhynia with a handful of men early in 1795, launched the slogan: "He who loves the country, let him go to Wallachia", and thought of creating there a centre of a new insurrection under the protection of Turkey, in hope of a Turkish-Russian war.

During the insurrection the Polish diplomatic agency in Paris had promoted the idea of forming a Polish legion by the side of the army of the French Republic, and of using for this purpose the Polish prisoners of war from the Austrian and Prussian service, who were growing more and more numerous. This idea was taken up after the catastrophe by prominent leaders of the Polish emigration, former members of the insurrectionary government and commanders of the army, who first flocked to Venice and later concentrated chiefly in Paris. However, they could not obtain a favourable decision either from the Third

Committee of Public Safety or from the Executive Directory. France, in fact, while inclined to encourage a "confederation" in Moldavia, as committing Turkey and alarming Russia and Austria by the phantom of a new insurrection, would gladly have seen a new "useful diversion" in Poland, but nevertheless avoided taking any steps which might have roused Catherine II to action against France, or have complicated possible negotiations with Austria, or caused a conflict between France and Prussia. That article of the Constitution of the year III (1795) which forbade keeping foreigners in the service of the Republic became a convenient pretext for declining Polish proposals.

Matters stood somewhat differently when in the autumn of the year 1796 Lieutenant-General John Henry Dąbrowski appeared in Paris, with the halo of a splendid reputation won by his successes in the year 1794 against the Prussians. He had been invited by Suvorov to serve Russia, but in vain, and to serve Prussia by Frederick William II himself; now he was received with great respect by the French generals. Not only would his person lend more authority to Polish plans, which for him were a continuation of his own projects of 1793 and also from the fall of the insurrection. Other circumstances were joined to that: above all the military and political situation in Italy, where Bonaparte's army was almost exhausted and much threatened after his amazing victories and needed a great reinforcement, and where the feats of its commander led to the establishment of a national army in Lombardy. Thus the conception of placing the Polish detachments in Lombard service became advantageous from two points of view. First, this would give Bonaparte a new division of brave and experienced soldiers. Secondly, as a Lombard army, the Poles gave better guarantees than the Lombards themselves of faithfulness to "the great nation", "the mother Republic"—France, and of service in realizing her political plans. This very consideration, however, must have caused diffidence and unwillingness on the part of Bonaparte who had the foundation of a national State in Lombardy seriously at heart. Therefore Dąbrowski was badly received in Milan (December 1796), and it took a month to break down the prejudice against him. However, the military reasons in favour of the formation of a legion prevailed with Bonaparte. On 9 January 1797 a convention, ratified by Bonaparte, was concluded between the General Administration of Lombardy and Dąbrowski, the Polish lieutenant-general, concerning the creation of the "Polish Legions auxiliary to Lombardy". For the new formations the convention prescribed a uniform,

military marks of distinction and forms of organization, all resembling the Polish as closely as possible; the epaulets were to be in Lombard colours with an inscription: "Gli uomini liberi sono fratelli"; the cockade worn by the legions was to be French as "the emblem of the nation who is the protectress of the free". On the part of Lombardy the assurance was given that her inhabitants would regard the legions "as their brothers, and not as foreign soldiers", guaranteeing to the legionaries the right of citizenship and that of returning to their country when Poland should need them. These terms differ patently from those of a common contract of hiring foreign soldiers. The political character of the convention was emphasized in Dąbrowski's manifesto, which called the Poles to a contest "for the common cause of all nations—freedom", because "the triumphs of the Commonwealth of France were our only hope"; similarly, the manifesto of the General Administration of Lombardy declared: "The Lombard people stretch out to you fraternal hands and call you to co-operation in the struggle for freedom...." "You shall share this country with us until the happy time, perhaps already near, when in joy you will again see your families and victoriously restore your own country."

The cadres of the legions were formed by insurrectionary officers living in exile or coming from Poland—some even on foot—in answer to Dąbrowski's manifesto. The ranks were filled up with Poles from the Austrian service who were prisoners in the French camps (*dépôts*), and who now willingly joined the fraternal ranks. Also deserters from the Austrian regiments were flowing in, and young volunteers who had forced their way from Poland. As men, equipment and arms became available, battalions were formed. They failed to take any important part in the campaign of 1797. The Poles, who desired to fight for "freedom, one and indivisible", had to quench in blood a rising against the French near Salò and in Verona (April 1797). At the moment when the preliminary peace negotiations were concluded at Leoben, the Polish legions already amounted to 6000 men. In the summer they were finally organized into two legions of infantry, corresponding to the French half-brigades, and one battalion of artillery.

In the meantime (June 1797) some of the Polish ex-service men, over 1600 in number, in Moldavia, encouraged by the French ambassador, General Aubert-Dubayet, who desired to entangle Turkey in a war with Austria, attacked, under the command of Brigadier Denisko, the Bukovina borderland, and there, after several small

encounters, sustained a sanguinary defeat; eight of the prisoners were hanged and among them the major of the former Polish Guard, Frederic Mellfort, one of the heroes of the Warsaw insurrection of the year 1794, the first Polish officer put to death by the usurpers after the partitions. Emperor Francis I, in a special decree, announced in the name of the welfare of his "faithful and beloved subjects" that insurgents and their partners would be sentenced and hanged within twenty-four hours. The same fate threatened those who forced their way to the legions. After the unfortunate "expedition of Bukovina" some Polish officers and soldiers obtained the Russian "pardon", and some the Austrian; some joined the service of Passwan-Oglu, a rebel Pasha of Widdin; the most persevering gathered in Constantinople and were gradually sent to Italy to the legions, with some help from Turkey.

The legions lived in hope that the peace negotiations would fail and war break out anew, in which case they would march—as they sang—"from the Italian soil to Poland". There was also a tendency to create by their side in Milan a Polish national representation, by summoning there the "Great" Parliament, which had been only adjourned in 1792; the admission of Polish delegates to the peace negotiations was demanded. The number of soldiers had reached 7600 when the peace of Campo Formio cancelled all expectations of resumption of the Polish cause. In the negotiations a sort of "iunctim" had been formed between the matter of the Polish legionaries and their adherents in the home country, and the matter of the corps of French emigrants and royalists in general. No distinct obligation was given, concerning a discharge of either the Polish or the emigrant formations. But the obligation was accepted, "not to render any help or support, direct or indirect, to those who would intend to damage either of the contracting parties". The admission of a Polish delegation to the congress of Rastatt was out of the question, as only France and the States of the German Reich were to take part in it.

The legions remained in the service of the new Cisalpine Republic. By their strength of will, the commanders prevented disorganization and dispersion. They believed that these Polish soldiers must not be allowed to return to the Austrian ranks upon a "pardon" of the Emperor, or the officers to lead a homeless life. In order to save the moral power of the legions, efforts were made to strengthen their ideological ties with France by propaganda of "republican principles", by making of them a school of citizenship and preparing them to be officers, commissioned and non-commissioned, in a future



insurrection. Such was also the advice given later by Kościuszko. The new convention concluded by Dąbrowski with the Cisalpine Directory (17 November 1797) gave full satisfaction to the national dignity of the Poles; it bore an expressly political character, it defined strictly the conditions under which the legions as an army, preserving their arms and equipment, were to go back to the restored Poland. This convention, however, was not ratified by the Legislative Body of the Cisalpine. The legions aroused some fears and diffidence; they were suspected of being an instrument of French rule over the "sister Republic".

In the meantime (since December 1797) the major part of the legions under the command of Dąbrowski and Kniaziewicz operated in the territory of the Papal State (San Leo, Pesaro) and later on marched towards Rome; there they were kept on garrison duty during 1798 and then took part in the suppression of peasant revolts. In the campaign of Naples (December 1798) they fought with distinction (at Magliano, Falari, Calvi, at the capture of Gaëta and Capua); Kniaziewicz was sent to Paris to present to the Directory thirty banners which had been taken. The booty in horses enabled the legions to form an excellent brigade of cavalry, which under the name of the Vistula Lancers was to win fame later on in Spain.

The outbreak of the second Coalition War revived the hopes of the legionaries and drew the suspicions of the French Government upon them. Thaddeus Kościuszko since the summer of the year 1798 was staying in Paris; he had come there with a confidential mission from the American Democratic Party, to improve by his influence the relations, then very strained between the United States and France. He now not only exercised moral authority over the legions, but in the eyes of the French Government he was an expert on Polish problems and an unofficial minister for Polish affairs. The formation of new legions was projected, first in the service of "Helvetia" and again in the service of "Batavia".

But meanwhile there came the catastrophe of Dąbrowski's legions. The second legion under the command of General Rymkiewicz lost two-thirds of its soldiers in killed and wounded in the first battles on the Adige (26 March, 4 April 1799); its commander was slain. The remnants under the command of General Wielhorski were incorporated in the garrison of Mantua, where they took part in the defence, and at the capitulation, on the strength of a secret additional clause accepted by General Foissac-Latour, the Austrians seized the legionaries as deserters; the soldiers in masses were flogged through the

line and sent in chains to their regiments. The second legion suffered almost total extermination.

Meanwhile the main force of the legion under the command of Dąbrowski arrived from Naples. As a component of Macdonald's army in the battle on the Trebbia (17-19 June), in unrelenting struggles against the Russians of Suvorov, the legion infantry suffered uncommonly heavy losses; of five battalions, only two were able to force their way through with their wounded general, and three perished. The remnants of the legions continued to melt, not only in battles but also because of the misery which reigned in the French army, pushed into the mountains of Liguria.

In the meantime it had been decided in Paris to form a new legion under Kniaziewicz (the so-called Danubian legion) and to reconstitute later the Italian legion under Dąbrowski; this time both these legions were taken into the French service, but while the national uniform was granted to them, the political terms of the former convention were cancelled. In 1800 both legions were composed of eleven battalions of infantry, one cavalry regiment, one battalion of foot artillery, one company of horse artillery, altogether 13,000 soldiers. In the campaign of that year the legion of Kniaziewicz with one regiment of cavalry won special distinction at Hohenlinden (3 December).

The terms of the Treaty of Lunéville with Austria and especially of that in Paris with Russia struck a blow to the legions by including distinct obligations to foil all activities which might cause damage to the other contracting party. All Polish troops were gathered in Italy and transformed into half-brigades in the Italian or Etrurian service. A strong ferment seized them; their republican views as well as the disappointment of their hopes had the effect that the Poles found themselves in determined opposition to the First Consul; mad schemes of military action were formed. Even Dąbrowski himself thought again of a spontaneous expedition to the Ionian Islands and to the Morea, and of restoring Sparta with the Polish bayonet. Officers left the ranks in large numbers and returned to the country, obtaining amnesty; those who remained conspired with the Italian (*Raggionanti*) and the French (*les Philadelphes*) officers. This contributed to the sending of two half-brigades, which meant the best part of the legions (almost 6000 men) under General L. Jabłonowski, to San Domingo (1802), whence only 300 returned; the rest, if they did not perish in battle or of tropical fever, were carried into Negro or English captivity. The legionaries fought there unwillingly. Some Poles went over to the Negroes and settled among them, and families of natives in the

Isle of Haiti still bear Polish names; on the whole the Poles did not leave a bad memory behind them there.

One regiment of infantry and one of cavalry of the legions remained in Italy. They fought with brilliant distinction at Castel Franco with the Austrians (24 November 1805), turning the scale of victory. On the other hand, the infantry regiment sustained a severe defeat in the battle with the English at Maita (Santa Euphemia, 3 July 1806), losing numerous prisoners. Crowds of Polish supernumerary officers, after long inactivity "pending reorganization" were gradually in 1805 and 1806 summoned to service in French troops and staffs. Dąbrowski himself commanded in the Abruzzi as a general of division in the Italian service. Such was the decline of the legions.

In the meantime war broke out between Napoleon and Prussia. At its very beginning the Emperor's thoughts turned to evoking desertion among the Poles in Prussian service and to making military use of those who would become captives. He issued a decree (20 September 1806) concerning the formation of the "Northern Legion" under the command of General Zająček, who had been in French service since 1797. The legion did not even bear a Polish name, and the call to join its ranks was addressed to "the children of the North, the fearless warriors", and not expressly to the Poles. After this step, which did not commit him politically, Napoleon foresaw the further moves and called Dąbrowski to his side. He reached Napoleon after Jena; had his first audience in Potsdam and there began conferences upon the formation of a Polish army, 40,000 strong. Dąbrowski demanded of Napoleon a manifesto to the Polish nation and the introduction of Polish administration in the territories of the former Commonwealth, to be gradually conquered by the French army. The Emperor issued no manifesto; he only approved one written by Wybicki and signed by Dąbrowski (4 November) which distinctly referred to his will and his words: "I shall see whether the Poles are worthy to be a nation...."

Dąbrowski arrived in Poznań on 6 November, two days after the French troops had entered it, enthusiastically welcomed by the Poles; in Western Poland the insurrection was already breaking out. Officers from the legions and of the time of Kościuszko formed armed troops. On the following day the insurgents took Kalisz, disarming its garrison and seizing Government money reserves and stores. They invaded Silesia; a detachment formed in the Kalisz district, together with a French squadron, attacked the fortress of Częstochowa on 18 November and forced its garrison to capitulate. In the liberated territories,

Polish insurrectionary authorities were established and the citizens spontaneously voted the creation of armed forces. Dąbrowski from Poznań decreed a uniform organization of the military effort; for every ten houses one foot soldier was to be produced, equipped and dressed by the citizens; also a levy of every tenth horse was ordered. The forecast for the whole territory of the Commonwealth annexed by the Prussians amounted to 36,000 cavalry and infantry. The formation of regular forces began.

The spontaneous activity of Western Poland was in contrast with a certain reserve and hesitation of the Warsaw sector of "South Prussia" and of the town itself, which Murat captured on 28 November. Here certain political securities were demanded, the people looked with expectation to the prominent personalities of the time of the "Great Parliament" and insurrection. Some turned their eyes towards Kościuszko, who was staying in France in complete isolation and in determined opposition to the Empire; others looked to Prince Joseph Poniatowski, who was living in Warsaw in demonstrative abstinence from politics. Kościuszko refused to come, and made his arrival dependent upon far-reaching guarantees from Napoleon. Poniatowski decided to create accomplished facts and announced his adhesion by returning to active service. This decided the attitude of Warsaw and removed the threatening discord. But at the same time power, which was entirely in the hands of Dąbrowski, underwent a division. The difficulties which had arisen were solved by Napoleon's decree (14 January 1807), which constituted a Governing Commission of five "directors" (ministers), in which Poniatowski was given the department (ministry) of war. The army was to form three large divisions, called legions, each comprising four infantry and two cavalry regiments, three companies of artillery, and one company of commissariat troops. The Warsaw legion under Poniatowski received the number 1; that of Kalisz (under Zająček) was to be number 2; that of Poznań (under Dąbrowski), which already existed and had been used, was to be number 3. These decisions gave rise to embitterment and dissension; Zająček and Dąbrowski did not conceal their animosity against Poniatowski; also the majority of the legionaries was opposed to him. It took years to establish his authority in the army and to win for him the hearts of his subordinates.

Besides a Polish army of the line, representing a proposed force of 39,000 men, there was the mass levy, called up at Napoleon's wish, composed, according to old Polish custom, of the country gentry with their "train" soldiers, or of "substitutes" put into the field by

the landowners. This antiquated institution did not suit the changed conditions of the time, but gave 3000 to 4000 cavalry fit for use in the field. There was also the "Northern Legion" in the pay of France, amounting to 6000 men. The remnants of the old legions which had come over from Italy, were developed in Silesia into a "Polish-Italian legion", composed of three infantry and one cavalry regiment, altogether 8000 men; soon after its arrival from Italy one regiment of cavalry won brilliant distinction. At last Napoleon called into being a Polish regiment of light horsemen of the Guard (*chevaux-légers*), composed of volunteers, the *élite* of the Polish youth. The total Polish military effort during this war surpassed 50,000.

In the war operations there participated the division of Dąbrowski (parts of the third and of the second legion and of the mass levy), which was active in the West Prussia of that time and at the siege of Danzig, where also the "Northern legion" operated; other detachments of the second and the first legions and of the mass levy formed under the command of Zajączek a corps of observation near Nibork (Neidenburg). Dąbrowski with a strong division took part in the summer campaign in East Prussia; he also participated in the battle of Friedland. Particular Polish regiments of different formations served at the sieges of Kołobrzeg (Kolberg) and Grudziądz (Graudenz).

The Duchy of Warsaw, created by the Treaty of Tilsit, was to maintain an army of 30,000, according to the Constitution granted by Napoleon. Within this army, Poniatowski (the minister of war) succeeded in incorporating the "Northern legion"; he failed to incorporate the "Polish-Italian legion", although the legionaries unanimously declared that they wished to serve their country rather than the Emperor of the French. This legion, renamed the "Vistula legion", remained in the service of France. What was more, it soon became apparent that the small Duchy of Warsaw was not able to maintain 30,000 soldiers at peace strength. For this reason, by a convention at Bayonne (10 May 1808), Napoleon took into his pay three regiments of the Duchy, 8000 men, with the promise of giving them back to Poland when she should need them. If we add to this the one regiment of light horsemen of the guard, we obtain the total of 16,000 to 17,000 Polish soldiers in the service of France; all these regiments participated in the Spanish war in the years 1808-12, violating their convictions, but believing that their reward for the service to Napoleon would be the independence and reunion of their country. They won glory by their bravery: the light-horsemen of the

guard at Somo-Sierra on 30 November 1808; the Vistula legion at Tudela, in both sieges of Saragossa and on many other occasions; the Vistula lancers at Tudela, Talavera, Ocaña, Albuera; the Warsaw regiments at Almonacid, Ocaña, Fuengirola.

The army of the Duchy of Warsaw, like the Polish legions in Italy and the Danubian legion, received an organization after the French pattern, French regulations translated into Polish, and French military law. This very fact marked a great turning-point in the Polish military institutions, which in the last period of the Commonwealth were based upon Prussian models. Bodily punishment disappeared. The personal dignity of the ordinary soldier was now severely protected. The cult of honour which up till that time was the privilege of the body of officers only, gradually permeated the ranks filled with sons of peasants. A still more decisive change was connected with the system of conscription, introduced by Poniatowski upon the French pattern (1808), which established—at least in principle—an equal and uniform duty of military service for all classes of society. As in France, conscription in Poland amalgamated the nation; the recruit who in the last years of the Commonwealth was chosen, but was a sort of living tribute offered to the State by landowners and town authorities, now went to fulfil his national duty as a citizen, made honourable by the fact that it became universal. Therefore the military institutions of the Duchy not only enrolled many fighters but also gave Poland a large number of people conscious of their nationality, and forwarded the process of consolidating large masses into a united national community.

The reorganization and training of the army of the Duchy was effected in the years 1807-8 under the superintendence of Davoût, the ablest in this field among the marshals of the Empire. Poniatowski recognized himself as his disciple. The Polish army acquired French infantry tactics, even introducing improvements, such as evolutions at the run, and French artillery tactics of which General Pelletier was the distinguished inspector. The Polish cavalry, all armed with lances, had tactics of its own, which had been tried out in the campaigns of the last years of the Commonwealth, and of the legions.

The war with Austria in 1809 was the first great trial of the new army. Relying on his alliance with Russia, Napoleon did not expect an Austrian attack on the Duchy. In case of Austrian aggression against Germany he counted upon the Russians immediately entering Galicia, in which case it would be the task of the Polish army to play

a secondary role in a diversion in the direction of Cracow. Therefore the forces of the Duchy were not strengthened, but reduced to 15,000 men by detaching some regiments to Danzig and the Prussian fortresses. With these forces Poniatowski had to defend the country against an unexpected offensive from Radom towards Warsaw, undertaken by the VIIth Austrian corps of Archduke Ferdinand d'Este, of more than twice the strength of the Polish troops (32,000 men, not counting the garrisons in both Galicias). At Raszyn (19 April), the Poles offered brave resistance (11,000 against 30,000); when endangered by outflanking, they retreated towards Warsaw, for the defence of which forces were lacking. Poniatowski was compelled to conclude a convention, surrendering Warsaw to the Austrians. He himself with his army retreated to the right bank of the Vistula, beyond the lower Narew, and afterwards, by a sudden aggressive turn against the Austrian troops which had crossed the Vistula, he drove them across the river. He then marched into New Galicia, and his advance guards under the command of General Sokolnicki took by storm the bridge-head Góra Kalwaria (Mount Calvary) on 3 May, foiling an offensive intended by the Archduke. Then the Polish army progressed quickly, occupying Lublin, taking the fortified town of Sandomierz (Sokolnicki on 18-19 May) and the fortress of Zamość (Pelletier on 20 May), carrying away thousands of captives and large quantities of war material. At the end of May, Polish troops entered Lwów. In the whole eastern district of the old and the new Galicia an armed rising against the Austrians broke out, and in all unoccupied parts of the Duchy new battalions and squadrons of soldiers, as well as masses of national guards, were organized.

Meanwhile the Archduke, who, by conquering and surrendering the Duchy, was to win the co-operation of Prussia against Napoleon, instead of offering battle to Poniatowski, turned down the Vistula in the direction of Toruń, to impress the neighbours by the capture of this fortress. Besides, he regarded his campaign as lost and took into account the necessity of surrendering Galicia to the Russians by way of security. He failed to take Toruń (attacked on 15 May); Frederick William III avoided co-operation and occupation of the Duchy. The Archduke then decided to leave the Duchy and to march against Sandomierz. Warsaw was set free on 2 June. The Austrians regained Sandomierz (18 June) after a sanguinary battle, having driven Poniatowski over the river San (12 June). Idle, with their guns in rest at their feet, there were present at these battles the Russian divisions of the auxiliary corps of Prince Golitsyn, who after three months

appeared with a force of 32,000 men, but with no intention of shedding Russian blood. For a secret understanding, concluded (18 April) between Alexander I and a special deputy of Austria, Prince Schwarzenberg, had settled everything beforehand: the delay in the arrival of Russian forces as well as the avoidance of hostile operations against the Austrians, and the maintenance of the obligations of the treaty of the third partition concerning preventive action against the restoration of Poland. Since that moment the Russians conducted the war in a peculiar manner, in perfect understanding with the enemy, planning with him in advance every movement to the disadvantage of the Polish ally, and trying to deprive the Poles of all foundation for an insurrection in Galicia.

Left to himself, Poniatowski gathered his forces near Puławy about the end of June, and with the new divisions of Zajączek and Dąbrowski, took the offensive in the direction of Cracow. After small encounters with the rearguards of the Archduke, who had been ordered with his corps to the chief Danubian theatre of war, on 15 July the Poles entered Cracow, whither, at the last moment, the Austrians had succeeded in bringing the Russians; and there nearly was a battle for the possession of Cracow between the two allied armies. This ended in a joint occupation of the town. The campaign, interrupted by an armistice, finished with a brilliant success of the Galician insurgents near Tarnopol (the capitulation of General Bücking at Wieniawka on 17 July). Poniatowski took advantage of the armistice to organize his armed forces, which had increased considerably. Besides the "Warsaw army", there was already on foot (at the expense of the country and of Napoleon) a new insurrectionary army, called by the Emperor "French-Galician". On 1 November, Poniatowski had at his disposal 62,000 men in both armies, of which almost 49,000 were in the country. Such a result of the campaign made Poniatowski famous not only among his own countrymen, but raised him to the position of an idol among the Polish army. After two years Davout wrote to him: "In my opinion there is no situation so difficult that Your Highness could not find a way out of it, after what you did in the year 1809, when your situation was really almost hopeless; it was then that Your Highness won great fame, and during the few months of the campaign turned upon yourself the eyes of all people."

A direct result of the war of 1809 in Poland was the prospect of a new war between Napoleon and Russia—over Poland. In December Davout sent orders to Poniatowski, in case a Russian invasion should follow; at the same time Napoleon concluded a convention with King



Frederic Augustus, which imposed upon the Duchy the duty of maintaining an army of 60,000 soldiers. Thus the Polish military effort was doubled; under this burden the finances of the Duchy broke down finally and the State was endangered by a collapse; it was with difficulty that Napoleonic Poland held out till the war of 1812.

This war Napoleon decided to wage with the greatest possible participation of Polish soldiers. Partly at his own expense he considerably augmented the army of the Duchy above its normal strength, putting into the field new battalions in some regiments, and increasing the number of bayonets and sabres in all. At the moment when the war began the "Warsaw" army amounted to 74,722, to which at least 11,000 must be added as serving in the light horsemen of the guard, in the Vistula legion and in the regiments of French lancers, formed of Poles; besides, about 15,000 recruits and men of the mobile national guard were used in the field; this makes about 98,000, not counting the Lithuanian army. The small Duchy of Warsaw put into the field an army of nearly 100,000 soldiers, which the large Commonwealth of Poland during the Four Years' Parliament could not accomplish. Thus, those opinions which still haunt the pages of historians, maintaining that the Poles acted but half-heartedly on the side of Napoleon in 1812, are entirely groundless. The Duchy acted beyond its strength. One may rather speak of a disappointment caused by those lands of the former Commonwealth which were still in the hands of Russia, and which either did not rise in arms at all (Volhynia, Podolia and the Ukraine), or co-operated with the Napoleonic army not whole-heartedly (Lithuania). It must be stated, however, that if the Polish element in Lithuania did take an active part in the events of that year, it did so entirely and only on the side of Napoleon, and the whole of the Lithuanian country population favoured Napoleon and desired his victory. Lithuania's military effort, paralysed as it was by misleading orders as well as by a terrible devastation of the country at the very beginning of the war, expressed itself by putting into the field about 16,000 fighting men.

In 1812 the Polish army was not acting in one mass. Besides the Vth (Polish) corps of the Great Army, composed of three divisions and commanded by Poniatowski, there were divisions of Polish infantry in the IXth corps (the regiments from Spain) in the Xth corps (the regiments of the Danzig garrison) and *à la suite* of the Guards (the Vistula legion returning from Spain). Of the Polish cavalry there was one division in the Vth corps, one in the IVth corps of cavalry reserve,

and separate regiments in other corps. Finally, in the course of the war a combined division was formed on the river Bug. Among the events of this war, in which the Poles took a prominent part, the following must be noted: a heavy defeat of Polish cavalry at Mir on 10 July (for which Jerome, King of Westphalia was to blame), a splendid action of Polish cavalry at Ostrowno on 25 and 26 July (under the personal command of Murat), the attack on Smoleńsk of the Polish infantry on 17 August (under Napoleon's eyes), the participation of Poniatowski in the battle on the river Moskva (7 September), his well-conducted action at Chirikov (29 September), his role in the fighting at Tarutino (18 October), the large participation of the Poles in the struggles during the retreat; furthermore, Dąbrowski's operations in Lithuania, not too fortunate in shielding the communications of the Great Army, his sanguinary defeat sustained on 21 November in the defence of Borysów; finally, real hecatombs of victims, sacrificed by the Polish army in the battle of 28 November on both banks of the Berezina, where three Polish generals of division were wounded and more than 210 officers fell or received wounds. Of course this is not a full enumeration of the operations and encounters in which the Poles took part. Of 96,000 Polish soldiers (together with Lithuanian formations) used in this campaign 72,000 perished, not counting those who after the return died of typhoid fever in garrisons and hospitals. Polish artillery, though reduced during the retreat by ceding part of the guns to other corps which had lost theirs, returned in good order to Warsaw without the loss of a single piece.

After the terrible catastrophe, the restoration of the Polish army for the war of the year 1813 seems miraculous. When we put together the Polish regiments in the garrisons of the besieged fortresses of Danzig and Zamość, the fresh Lithuanian regiments in the garrison of Modlin, and the Polish light horse regiments in the French service, we obtain almost 40,000 soldiers, being the Polish military effort of the year 1813, when the only remaining object was, as Poniatowski described it, "to keep up the good name of Poland" ("*faire bien sonner le nom Polonais*"). In the Saxon spring campaign there participated only the weak division of Dąbrowski, retreating from Western Poland; in the autumn campaign Poniatowski took part, after having arrived from Cracow; his army formed the VIIIth corps and the IVth corps of cavalry reserve. The participation of the Poles in this campaign expressed itself in the number of 21,000 soldiers (besides the 13,000 to 14,000 who remained in the besieged fortresses). Dąbrowski was active on the Elbe from the side of Prussia; Ponia-

towski on the Bohemian frontier, first on the right and afterwards on the left bank of the Elbe, and his shielding operations, excellently conducted, put him high in Napoleon's opinion. The French cavalry being scanty, the Polish became now of particular importance, doing hard service in the most self-sacrificing manner, always against the overwhelmingly superior cavalry forces of the Allies.

During all the four days of the battle at Leipzig (16-19 October) the Poles shed their blood freely. Poniatowski (appointed Marshal of France on the first day of this battle), on 19 October belonged with his corps to the rear-guard. Repeatedly wounded and fighting to the utmost, when by the untimely blowing up of a bridge over the Elster, he was cut off from the army and in danger of captivity, he threw himself with his horse into the river and was drowned. The Poles lost there about 10,000 soldiers, killed, wounded or taken prisoner; nearly three hundred officers were slain or wounded.

In the campaign of 1814, five Polish cavalry and one infantry regiment took an honourable part; the regiment of light horse of the guard won special fame, and the "Cracovians" (a cavalry regiment formed of Cracow peasants in 1813) made the last attack in the battle for Paris. After the campaign, the Poles, following Napoleon's advice, surrendered themselves to Alexander I. In his instructions for Caulaincourt, concerning negotiations over his abdication, Napoleon recommended that he should obtain for the Poles the liberty of returning to their country, and this matter (besides that of maintaining the legion of honour) he put before his personal interests and those of his family. In fact, article 19 of the Treaty of Paris on 11 April 1814 guaranteed to the Polish army a return to its country with arms and baggage and with maintenance of the orders and the pensions attached to them, in recognition of their honourable service.

A squadron of Polish light horse became a component of the miniature army of Napoleon as monarch of the isle of Elba; it afterwards took part in the campaign of 1815 and fought at Ligny and Waterloo.

Polish military efforts in the Napoleonic wars came to an end apparently without result. In fact Poland achieved much by them. In the course of the eighteenth century the Poles had lost their military fame; it was generally doubted whether they would be able to fight for their country. Their readiness for sacrifice and their bravery was re-established by the insurrectionary war of the year 1794, and shook the general opinion of the superiority of Russians, Prussians and Austrians over Poles. But it was in the time of the Napoleonic wars

that Europe became accustomed to look upon the Poles as a nation of brave soldiers, capable of the greatest sacrifices for their country, worthy to stand among the best armies in the world. For a long time no more was heard of the anarchic temperament attributed to the Poles, of their reputed incapacity for disciplined and united action and their alleged lack of perseverance and energy. To the question put by Napoleon, whether the Poles were worthy to be a nation, their military history of that period had given a positive answer. .

## CHAPTER XI

### THE DUCHY OF WARSAW

WHEN Napoleon occupied Warsaw in November 1806, he began to organize the Polish territories gained from the Prussians. A Government Commission was appointed on 14 January 1807, consisting of the directors of the departments of war, justice, internal affairs, police, and of finance, and seven other members. This took over the general administration of the six Polish provinces of Prussia, represented Poland in the relations with Frederick William, and was empowered to exercise legislative authority; but its chief tasks were to raise an army and to victual the French and associated forces. Its budget of May 1807 amounted to 34,444,327 Polish florins, of which 25,539,008 were for the army; a deficit of 25,000,000 florins was to be covered by an additional levy on the population of the country then freeing itself from alien subjection.

In organizing that part of Poland which had been held by Prussia, Napoleon gave no formal pledges. He merely called upon the Poles for voluntary military collaboration in his firm military occupation. At Vienna, in November and December 1806, he proposed that Galicia be exchanged for Silesia, then occupied by him; but the negotiations were soon broken off. He undertook *pourparlers* with the Prussians after the battle of Preussisch-Eylau, hinting that Poland might be restored to them (March 1807). After winning Friedland (June 14) and reaching the Niemen, he began direct negotiations for peace with the Tsar. He proposed to retain the territories as far as the Elbe, and Silesia. Certain that Alexander would not accept it, he offered Poland to the Tsar, either joined to the Russian Empire by personal union or under his brother, the Grand-Duke Constantine, as King of Poland. Bound to Frederick William by treaty, Alexander endeavoured to save Silesia for Prussia and rejected the French proposal; he suggested, however, that Jerome, Napoleon's brother, be offered the Polish crown. Napoleon did not follow this advice. He created the Kingdom of Westphalia for his brother, and made Poland a buffer state which he entrusted to the Elector, then King, of Saxony, whose dynasty had been declared by the reformed Polish Constitution of 3 May 1791, to be entitled by inheritance to the

Polish throne. To pacify Alexander, Russia was given the Białystok region, in the east. At the request of the Tsar, a wide belt of Polish soil was restored to Prussia, thus forming a corridor which cut off Danzig from the rest of Poland. The Polish State, constituted within such restricted limits by the Treaty of Tilsit, received the name of the Duchy of Warsaw (7-9 July).

After his triumph on the Niemen, Napoleon dictated a constitution for the Duchy during his stay at Dresden (19-22 July), disregarding the postulates suggested by the Government Commission of Poland and based on the country's traditions. Moreover, he gave land worth 30 million francs to his generals. He organized the Duchy after the French model, and left 30,000 men to occupy it under Marshal Davout. A resident minister was installed in Warsaw to exercise control over the authorities of the Duchy. In addition, Napoleon joined the Duchy to Saxony by personal union under Frederick Augustus, a most kind-hearted and worthy man, but no ruler. He agreed very reluctantly to assume the onerous task, so contemporary opinion declared.

The Duchy in 1807 covered some 30,000 square miles and had a population of about 2,050,000 souls. After the war of 1809, the figures rose to some 45,000 square miles and about 4,335,000 souls. Over 81 per cent. of the population was rural. As already stated, the mode of administration was completely French. Article 6 of the Constitution affirmed that the "Government is vested in the person of the King". The six ministers were: Justice (F. Łubieński), Interior (S. P. Łuszczewski, and from 1812, T. Mostowski), War (Prince Joseph Poniatowski), Finance (T. Dembowski, from 1809, J. Weglenski, and from 1811, T. Matuszewicz), Police (A. Potocki, and from 1811, I. Sobolewski), and the Secretary of State (S. Breza). Each was directly responsible to the King, and enjoyed unimpaired supreme authority within his sphere. The King might nominate a Viceroy, but did not; he ruled the country through Breza, from whom he soon became inseparable. There was, however, a Council of the Ministers to examine their affairs and to report to the King. It was not a Cabinet, but merely an advisory body which prepared administrative enactments and decisions.

The Council of State was composed of the same ministers and of referendaries "nominated" in accordance with the constitution. After 1808 it was manned by appointed Councillors of State, and deliberated under a President, who also presided over the Council of Ministers (Małachowski, December 1807; Gutakowski, March

1809; and Stanislas Potocki). This was an advisory body with legislative scope; it served as a court of appeal, and as the Supreme Administrative Tribunal, which decided questions of competence and the impeachment of officials. The joint President of the two Councils gained the prerogatives, though not the title, of a viceroy in 1812 for the duration of the war.

The Duchy was divided into six *départements* and subdivided into sixty counties (*powiaty*); after the incorporation of Western Galicia, these were increased to ten *départements* and a hundred counties. Each of the *départements* was administered by a prefect, and each county by a subprefect. Burgomasters, nominated by the Crown, stood at the head of the municipalities.

The principle of the new administration can be summed up thus: a small number of directors but a large number of executive personnel; centralization of authority, with the whole administration dependent on the King. Administrators of all ranks none the less enjoyed great freedom of action and their responsibility was personal, not collegiate. This system was expected to yield a strong government. In practice, however, the King, though a conscientious man, was a sluggard, a slave to routine, and jealous of his authority. He refused to leave Dresden, and held up all matters for his own decision. The ministers vied with each other and manœuvred for influence at Dresden without any co-ordination. Royal decrees were secured in the same way. All this caused clashes to arise, and disrupted concerted action, a state of affairs which the Minister of the Interior was powerless to reform; able and industrious, he was withal weak and lacked energy. In spite of such a situation, in spite of a chronically empty Treasury and the lack of properly trained and prepared workers (owing to the relegation of the nation from political life during the preceding decade), the State functioned no worse than under the Prussian régime, whilst many of the prefects turned out to be men of outstanding ability who succeeded in conducting the normal administration of the country in spite of the complications due to dependence on the French authorities, the demands of the army, and the exigencies of the war.

The legislative organ of the Duchy was the Sejm (Diet, or Parliament). This body consisted of the Senate (the members of which were nominated for life by the King) and of the Chamber of Deputies, composed at first of sixty representatives of the gentry's provincial assemblies and forty borough deputies (later, 100 representatives and sixty-six deputies), elected for nine years, and deliberating for fifteen

days every two years. Legislative initiative and the sanction of enacted laws were prerogatives of the Crown. The prerogatives of the Sejm included voting the budget and amendments of civil, penal, and fiscal legislation. The Sejm was not, however, empowered to discuss current affairs *in corpore*; this right was reserved, and that within strictly defined limits, for the members of three commissions (the Treasury, Civil and Penal Law Commissions), chosen by the Chamber of Deputies. Suffrage to the Chamber of Deputies was based on property qualifications; rural or urban real estate, or the possession of commercial or industrial capital. Leading members of the free professions, army officers and the clergy were also given the vote. In such wise, apart from the landed gentry, the franchise was extended, at least formally, to the burghers and to peasant-farmers, provided that they owned real estate. The Jews were not enfranchised (the decree of 17 September 1808 envisaged that they would receive the vote after the lapse of ten years). But, in practice, the nation was represented by an enormous majority of the well-to-do gentry and, to some extent, by the rich burghers and the urban educated classes.

In spite of the formal maintenance of the old system of Estates in the Duchy, fundamentally and in practice equality before the law was binding on them all. Members of the "lower Estates" were admitted to the administration, to the judicature, and to the higher ranks in the army. Those members of the landed gentry who betook themselves to commercial and industrial pursuits bore the same fiscal burdens and were liable in equal measure to military service. The Napoleonic Code was introduced by Article 69 of the Constitution Act as from 1 May 1808, and was extended to the new provinces on 15 August 1810. The new civil code was designed to protect civil equality, and by reason of its lay structure (supplemented by the commercial code of 24 March 1809) served as a potent levelling force along modern lines; moreover, it introduced conditions which advanced the development of urban real estate and of industry, besides providing the principal foundations upon which rested the tenets of legality within the State. This legality found its expression in the exclusive application of statutes and laws by the tribunals, which extended their protection in equal measure to all concerned. The country received a homogeneous and efficient system of courts, independent as regards the administration and public in its procedure, under the supervision of its supreme authority, the Minister of Justice.

The authoritative Napoleonic system virtually excluded the idea of



local government. The constitution envisaged, apart from Prefectural Councils for disputes in each prefecture, departmental (or provincial), county, and municipal councils, attached to the various administrative bureaux. The councillors were to be nominated by the King, who selected the members of the General Council from a panel drawn up by the provincial assemblies (hence recruited solely from the ranks of the gentry), whilst members of the other councils were selected from panels proposed by the borough assemblies. The constitution did not, however, define the competence of the various councils. This was done by the national legislation of the Duchy; the decree of 7 February 1809, based on the practice binding within the Empire, extended the sphere of the councils' prerogatives. The General Council was to assemble once a year for a fifteen-day session as from 1 February 1809 in order to distribute the levies and imposts voted by the Sejm. They were to act as instances of appeal with regard to the county councils, which in turn possessed similar prerogatives upon their respective territories. Finally, Article 37 of the decree contained a clause which did not exist in France: it permitted deliberations on the needs and welfare of the provinces, recommendations for the improvement of the administrative apparatus, and the recording of complaints regarding any faults or irregularities observed in its operation. In spite of the dependence on France which had been imposed and voluntarily accepted, the Polish authorities endowed the nation with juridical bases for the development of provincial local government in the spirit of the old traditions of the country.

The administration of education and instruction in the Duchy was entirely extra-constitutional. Its beginnings dated back to the times of the Governing Commission, when supervision was first exercised over the Warsaw Lyceum as from 26 January 1807; this authority was extended by a collegiate body known as the Chamber of Education, which by April 1807 functioned as a ministry embracing all the territories liberated from Prussian rule. Although this body was not envisaged in the constitution, it operated until the fall of the Duchy under its able chairman, Stanislas Potocki. Nominally subordinate to the Minister of the Interior, the personality of its head was so strong that it maintained its independence and its *de facto* basis; none the less, it enjoyed the collaboration of the various constitutional administrative offices, had its own budget (between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 zł.), and founded a special advisory body, the Association for Elementary Education (26 April 1810), to promote a planned development of the school system. After the incorporation of Galicia

within the Duchy, the Chamber extended its authority to the newly liberated provinces and embraced the Academy at Cracow.

The organization of the Chamber was brought into line with the stipulations of the Constitution and the general juridical bases of the Duchy by the decree of 17 December 1810. It was established as the Directorate of National Education, but maintained its personnel, character and field of competence unimpaired. It lost its collegiate character and became a government office, based on the principle of individual operation. The Directorate comprised three sections: one economic, one for academic instruction, and one for lower-grade schooling. It assumed its new style on 7 January 1812, and remained under the management of Potocki, who had in the meantime also become President of the Council of State and Prime Minister.

The Directorate of National Education devoted chief attention to the foundation of folk-schools and to the development of the secondary school system, thus following the example of the Commission of National Education of 1773. It is of interest, too, that the public was enabled to participate in the management of educational affairs. Universities were not founded, but academic departments were opened after the French and post-Prussian system. A school of law was opened in 1808 on the initiative of the Minister of Justice, and a school of administrative sciences was attached to it in 1811; medical courses, commenced in 1807, were transformed into a college of physicians; the Lyceum was maintained, but not elevated to the dignity of a university department. The Academy of Cracow was virtually unchanged.

When the Chamber of Education took over the school system in the Polish territories recovered from Prussian rule, there were 600 schools for German settlers and 147 folk-schools; but only some forty primary schools had to be taken over in the provinces formerly under Austrian rule. When the Directorate of National Education handed over its school system to the Congress Kingdom of Poland in 1814, there were more than 1600 schools, with over 2000 teachers and well in excess of 50,000 pupils in attendance.

A characteristic feature of the new organization of the school system from the social aspect was the preparation of reciprocal assimilation between the well-to-do classes of the landed gentry and of the burghers, in spite of the maintenance of the division by Estates. There was penetration into each other's hitherto inviolate vocational preserves with similar, though not quite equal access to public offices and posts, the laicization of such important domains of public life as education and

the law, the organization of the family and the first intermarriages between these two great groups of the nation. All these were factors which conduced to diminish class prejudices and to bring about greater social cohesion. The Freemasons broke off from German influences and returned to the eighteenth-century traditions of a *rapprochement* with France, whilst the complete polonization of their ritual created a specific environment which conduced to blur the differences between the hitherto barred-off groups of the "wide world" and of "Society". The framework of Napoleonic organization and the conditions under which the new order developed introduced factors materially accelerating the appearance of changes which had been in course of preparation ever since the eighteenth century. The financial and economic situations combined to do the rest.

Agriculture issued from the cataclysms of the period of dismemberment seriously shaken. The disasters of war and the political upheavals of Kościuszko's times were coeval with bank failures (Potocki's, Tepper-Fergusson's and others); and a general decline of public confidence in the banking system, aggravated by a dislocation of finances, by currency depreciation and a flood of base coin, was coupled with the impoverishment and over-indebtedness of the real estate owners. The eleven years of peace during the Prussian régime, especially after the introduction of the land-mortgage system in 1797, coincided with a period of economic prosperity and a feverish speculation in land which spread from Prussia to the newly annexed areas (where the interest rate was two per cent. higher). At this epoch, the Polish landowners found it easy to secure large-scale and cheap credit. Prussian state-owned and private credit institutions invested their capital in the Polish territories, where the landed gentry soon incurred indebtedness of 150 million zł. A financial crisis broke out in Prussia in 1806, before the downfall of that kingdom, and the credits granted to the Polish debtors were called in. Hence, the agricultural interests of the former Prussian lands entered the war period during a time of economic depression, and later swiftly advanced down the path to bankruptcy. The war of 1806-7 caused enormous destruction of property and crops. Apart from acts of violence and arbitrary conduct, formal requisitions by the French and allied forces in 1807 and 1811-13 ruined the rural population, particularly the larger peasant and manor holdings. Some idea of the extent of this destruction is afforded by the never-honoured claims of the Duchy to compensation for war losses from France alone: as on 1 June 1815, the registered losses of private parties were returned at 115,520,000 zł. and those of

state-owned estates at 18,255,000 zł. The results soon became apparent: depopulation of the country, the impoverishment of the landed gentry, and sheer destitution and misery among the peasantry.

Ruined as the Duchy was, it was none the less forced to enter the Napoleonic Continental System. The export of agricultural produce was checked, whilst preferential Customs duties favoured French and Saxon goods. In addition, import, export and transit duties were steadily raised with regard to all other products. Colonial and British goods allegedly imported from Russia or brought in transit through the Duchy to Prussia swamped the country. This led to lower corn prices and a permanent rise in the prices of home and foreign manufactured goods. The divergency between the two sets of prices steadily widened as a typical symptom of the deepening depression. The year 1811-12 marks the trough, as then the index of rye, the staple farm crop of the country, fell to 51.7 as against the level noted in the last normal year (100 in 1805-6). Concurrently with the stagnation on the credit market, the indebtedness of the landowners grew steadily; as on 1 June 1815 it was over 100 million zł. in excess of the level ten years before, and amounted to about 360 million zł. in the whole of the later Congress Kingdom of Poland.

In the meantime, budgetary expenditure (especially the military) rose ceaselessly. Disbursements on the army accounted for 60-65 per cent. of the ordinary budget, which could with difficulty be compressed within 75 million zł. Every budget yielded a deficit, and the Duchy's balance of trade was uniformly adverse. The Duchy was obliged to carry too heavy a burden of obligations in favour of France, which had by the Bayonne Convention (1808) converted the former 43 million francs of nominal Prussian State indebtedness into the very concrete obligation to pay France 20 million francs at the rate of 37 francs per 60 zł. The Duchy was forced to incur other obligations with regard to France direct, taking up loans through Paris, Dresden or Leipzig banks in 1811 on severe conditions, against the guarantee of the Wieliczka Salt Mines. The burden of indebtedness laid on the Treasury in this connexion, excluding sums due to contractors and private parties, amounted to 91 million zł. All these were symptoms of the progressive financial breakdown of the Duchy and of the economic depression with its sharp repercussions on the economy of the land, aggravated by the checking of export, the general decline in consumption and the ever greater shrinkage in the purchasing capacity of the home market.

The Duchy of Warsaw sought to save the situation by systematically

applying a policy of inflation, proof of which was provided by the steady growth in the *disagio* of token coin, amounting to 20 per cent. abroad in 1808, and by the first strikes in the foodstuff industries in Warsaw in the same year. The authorities did their best to collect taxes by severe distraint. A reorganization of the distribution of taxation incidence was effected. While the ratio of direct to indirect taxation in the last Prussian budget had been 49 : 51, the budgets of the Duchy followed a different course. Direct taxes were increased at first; a "conditional quota" was introduced for all; the hearth tax was increased (1809). But at the same time the independent craftsmen, industrialists and merchants of the cities were burdened by high trading-licence fees and Customs duties, whilst all consumers had to pay higher indirect taxes.

Further changes followed after 1811, when Matuszewicz took over the Ministry of Finance. In his first budget (for that year), direct taxes decreased to only 25 per cent. of the total receipts. But state-owned landed estates were to yield 13.5 per cent. of the aggregate revenue, industry and trade about 11.5 per cent., indirect taxes payable by the masses (including the Salt Excise) 33 per cent., stamp fees 6.5 per cent., etc. The manorial estates could pay their taxes in kind and not necessarily in cash. This system, at any rate, finally led to the budget gaining a concrete, practical aspect; it was all but balanced at the cost of the masses and to the advantage of the large landowners.

At the same time, as from 1810, a moratorium was promulgated for this class, although it did not succeed in saving agriculture. The owners of speculative capital (contractors) and of the floating funds of industry and commerce, faced by the economic depression, lack of confidence in the banks, and by excessive fiscal charges imposed upon them, began to safeguard their capital by buying up country estates. For that matter, the moratorium was not an unmixed blessing for the country gentlemen. Not all of them were debtors; some were also creditors, creditors of other gentleman-farmers. The country landowners began to seek an assured position and income by occupying public posts. Thus a new class arose in the towns, that of representatives of the well-to-do landed gentry who spent the greater part of the year in the capital. Younger sons in search of public service posts and military appointments in great numbers reinforced the ranks of the urban intelligentsia; they became notaries-public, lawyers, state officials, local government employees, and professors. To these were added often converts from the Mosaic faith (Frankists).

Meanwhile, the prosperous purely city-bred, industrial and commercial classes (contractors, brewers, cloth manufacturers, etc.) shifted towards the rural areas. All this moderated the trend of Polish political thought.

Thus were revived the traditions of the Four-Year Sejm and the Constitution of 3 May 1791. Those who favoured this movement remained in close contact with the Barss Agency in Paris (as from 1794-5); they consisted chiefly of persons who helped to create the Polish Legions under Napoleon and supported General J. H. Dąbrowski's plans. Pre-eminently they aimed at reconstructing Poland with the support of France, and counted on international complications, not excluding war, to further their ends. None the less, they wished Poland to have an independent role, and tried to protect the country and the nation from risky, unnecessary exploits and undertakings involving excessive sacrifices. The need for adaptation to the changed circumstances was fully understood, and, although a traditional political structure for Poland was envisaged, it was to be amended in accordance with the new Napoleonic forms. Efforts were made to establish collaboration between the rich, educated burgher families of the cities and the well-to-do landed gentry. The gradual emancipation of the serfs was planned, whereby labour-rent would be supplanted by pecuniary payments. Extreme stress was laid on the vital need for spreading and extending education adapted to every class of the community. The members of this group of reformers were marked by free-thought of the Voltairean type, enthusiasm for classical culture, faith in progress as a result of the extension of public enlightenment and instruction on rationalistic bases, but without the rejection of the traditional attachment to the Roman Catholic faith. It was from among their number that Napoleon primarily selected the members of the Government Commission, and they furnished the future ministers and dignitaries of the Duchy: Malachowski, the chairman of the Government Commission and later speaker of the Senate, Stanislas Potocki and Gutakowski (both members of this Commission), Prince Joseph Poniatowski, the commander-in-chief of the Polish forces in 1809 and 1812, General Stanislas Fiszer, his chief of staff, a large part of the corps of generals, J. Niemcewicz, the inspired poet, and many others.

This new social class now created a pro-French and pro-Government attitude in Poland in spite of the constant recurrence of opposition of opinion. The Polish Government which arose was chiefly based on the support and participation of this class; its interests were princi-

pally taken into account when the budget was framed, and its views on the peasant question were accepted. Article 4 of the Napoleonic statute proclaimed: "Serfdom is abolished—the peasants are placed under the protection of the Tribunals." But Napoleon failed to take into account the actual general binding force of serf relations in Poland. The French code did not contain any concept of serfdom as a form of material obligation between landowner and tenant. Serfdom therefore remained beyond the law; it found no place within the fabric of the code, and therefore failed to secure judicial protection. The relevant article in the Statute required development, and this took place. The decree of 21 December 1807 defined: (1) the right of peasants to leave their lord's land with certain administrative formalities; (2) absolute freedom of peasants, on the other hand, to reside for a full year, provided they carried out the same obligations to which they had been subject theretofore; and (3) the introduction of judicial protection in contracts between landowners and agricultural tenants. This apparently innocuous decree, seemingly framed merely for the sake of law and order, introduced fundamental changes into the relations of the peasantry.

The decree actually assured the peasants freedom of movement from place to place, within the borders of the State. In practice, few availed themselves of this right, and it was only later that a livelier traffic ensued, especially in the western territories of the Duchy. This had adverse repercussions on agriculture, and eventually contributed to the rise of new industrial centres, such important manufacturing towns as Łódź and Żyrardów.

Viewed from the socio-economic angle, this decree was contrary to Article 4 of the Statute. For it gave the tenure of the land to the lords of the manor direct, and empowered them to evict, after the lapse of a single year, peasant farmers who had tilled holdings since time immemorial. The peasants, it is true, secured the right of freedom of movement—"as free as the birds", as Badeni, a contemporary commentator, picturesquely put it; but, like the birds, they could be chased away by the lords from any holding held by them as tenants.

Finally, although the decree envisaged the existence of new notarial offices for the registration of relations between landowners and peasant-tenants, this remained a dead letter. The fiction of voluntary agreement gave the landowner the right of imposing new burdens on the peasant-farmer, whilst the fact that serfdom was an extra-judicial obligation gave up the latter unconditionally into the hands of his master.

This state of affairs had serious repercussions on peasant husbandry and on the psychological attitude of the tenant-farmers. Inefficiency, enhanced lack of planned and sustained effort, economic indifference, and uncertainty of the morrow, all contributed still further to deepen the ill-effects of the economic disaster. The owners of the larger estates now began to show more energy in dispossessing the peasants and the number of evictions increased greatly. There was a turn in public opinion in 1808, which demanded some measure of assurance to the peasants of land of their own. But the Government of the Duchy did not defend them against undue burdens and fiscal dis-traints, or against the arbitrary conduct of the landowners, whilst it applied the regulations enforcing labour on fortification works without compunction. As Bignon wrote in 1811, "a great many more years will be necessary for people here to learn to consider peasants as human beings and to treat them as such". On the other hand, the peasants themselves had no consciousness of their role and significance as yet.

As it happened, however, there were groups in the community who desired to base the future of Poland on the peasantry. According to Bignon, peasant landowners could unite with the petty gentry to form a single coherent mass which would have stable, uniform interests. Such a class should have provided the basis for a concrete movement to consolidate Poland's independence, as also a strong foundation for a durable connection between France and Poland. But, degraded in the economic sense by the whole system of finance and national economy, it became a field for ferments, and provided a firm foothold for those who represented the radical school in Poland.

The groups favouring these trends consisted of members of Kościuszko's insurrectionary army of 1794. They formed the "De-putation" grouping which in 1798 established the Republican Society, the nucleus of the Jacobin group in the Duchy of Warsaw. Inveterate opponents of the old gentry system in all its forms, deists, rationalists of the French type, they spread hatred for monarchies, tyranny and conservatism, while propagating equality, the abolition of gentry rights, real freedom for the peasants, and education for all. Up to the Napoleonic era, they recognized the French Constitution of the Year III as the ideal form of social structure. Attached closely to Kościuszko, they believed in the possibility of another insurrection, and prepared to assume authority upon its successful outcome under the protecting wing of France. Removed from influence by Napoleon in 1807, they attacked the moderates for their insincere attitude



towards France, and themselves gradually cooled in their pro-French sympathies. They sought means for an independent Polish policy, and to this end stirred up the dissatisfied. Led by such men as Szaniawski, who had been mixed up in the hangings of 1794, and Godlewski, the deputy for Mariampol, they enjoyed the support of many members of the Polish Legions. They reached the hearts and minds of the petty gentry, the urban intelligentsia and the lower orders of the clergy: these they stirred up to opposition against foreign intervention, and inculcated a sincere attachment to the national traditions. With the rising tide of their opposition movement, they abandoned the basic postulates of their outlook on life. They were ready for an understanding with every opposition grouping and hence also with the representatives of reaction, provided always that these would join them in the struggle against alien influences.

There was also a decidedly reactionary movement which embraced the large landowners and the petty gentry in those parts of Poland which remained under Russian and Austrian rule. Bound up intimately with the traditions of the Targowica Confederation, this movement politically represented passivity whilst socially it accepted unreservedly the Russian order, involving the depression of the peasantry to the lowest possible level. Its slogans were: recognition of the authority of the Powers which had partitioned Poland, and reconciliation with them. It was the link between the old ignorant die-hards, those who submitted to Jesuit hegemony, and all those who were against the new ideas brought in by the Polish *émigrés*. The movement embraced the enormously rich landowners in the Ukrainian and Lithuanian borderlands, the newly created counts of the Austrian Crown in Galicia, and some, albeit few, of the aristocracy in Western Poland, under the Prussians. It counted on the patronage of Prince Adam Czartoryski, until recently a high dignitary of the Russian court, to which they mistakenly attributed their own reactionary aspirations.

The attitude of those who supported this movement was integrally inimical towards the Duchy of Warsaw, where poverty was rife, where modern lay thought had gained a firm footing, and where the peasantry had been liberated. They did all that was possible to confuse the issues, and their warnings filtered across the frontier in a constant stream. After 1810, the cautious Stanislas Zamoyski, the largest landowner in the Duchy, came near to their way of thinking. The episcopate favoured these views after the Napoleonic Code was introduced.

It is true that economic and social interests, the internal situation and the force of tradition made it incumbent on the Poles generally to maintain a defensive attitude towards Napoleon's policy. None the less, until the disaster of 1813, centrifugal trends gained predominance over centripetal, whilst the will to unity and the determination to wage a struggle for the restitution of Poland under the French Emperor gained the upper hand.

After the great efforts made in 1807 in the domains of insurrectionary struggle and of military-financial endeavour, depression ensued, accompanied by the difficulties of organizing the new State in 1808. The terms of the Bayonne Convention and the exemption of the French beneficiaries from paying their share of the fiscal burden in the Duchy (their numbers had increased by a further million after 1810) contributed to deepen the atmosphere of disappointment. This was removed by the publication in 1808 of the *Nil Desperandum* enunciations of Koll taj, the moral leader of the Jacobins, who thus prepared the field for the convocation of the first Sejm. For the public, nominally restored to its rights, the *imponderabilia* played the most important role. Hence, the Sejm which met in March 1809, although packed, was accepted by the people as a real tribune. Although the Sejm was required to increase taxation levies by 18 million z ., to raise the man-power of the army, and to postpone internal relations indefinitely, yet it agreed to these demands for the simple reason that the prospects of war for the further expansion of the Duchy and the desire to gain the confidence of "invincible" Napoleon called for sacrifices. War actually did break out soon after the Sejm had met, and it immediately gave vent to all the existing rivalries latent in the nation; everyone desired to overcome the enemy with the application of his own formulas and to lead Poland to renascence in his own manner.

The military authorities found it impossible to defend Warsaw against the Austrian forces (to whom they abandoned the capital) and recommenced operations in accordance with their own plans of an offensive. Seeking to save appearances, the Government withdrew to Toru , thence by the northern route to Tykocin, from which point (until the beginning of June) they attempted to govern. Before the capitulation, the Jacobins set up an *ad hoc* directorate in Warsaw under cover of the French resident, Serry, and incited the Duchy to sharp action against (domiciled) Austrians and Germans. Serry's flight left them to their own devices; they thereupon gained control of the recently formed departmental councils, which had been con-

stituted for the organization of a volunteer militia and the floating of a public internal loan, and utilized these bodies for propagating a strictly "national" policy. The councils, particularly in the north districts, carried out their tasks efficiently and began to feel themselves the real representatives of the nation. Although the Government soon afterwards returned to Warsaw and endeavoured to undermine the councils' prestige and authority, the position of the councils remained unchanged with the masses, and was even consolidated when they opposed the ministers in a struggle for the unhindered use of funds collected during the war. In these efforts, the councils found allies in the similar bodies set up in Galicia soon after. Even before this province was incorporated within the Duchy during the war of 1809, the Jacobins had established a firm foothold there. They made common cause with the local advocates of autonomy, effected a *rapprochement* with Stanislas Zamoyski, the reactionary chairman of the insurrectionary Central Government, and prepared the field for the future *rapprochement* with the post-Prussian councils and those of Galicia, where the Czartoryski family was the strongest factor. The need for retrenchment and economy now began to be felt in the councils and this gave rise to a trend for the reform of the Duchy's internal structure. Under their pressure the King actually appointed an administration-reform "deputation" composed exclusively of officials (20 June 1810). Before this body could complete its work, however, one of the ministers, Węgleński, responsible for the chronic budgetary deficits, decided to save himself by gaining the sympathies of the ever stronger opposition. He thereupon presented his own project—radically different from the Napoleonic model—and proposed a return to the traditional Polish, honorary, local government and collegiate administration.

The approaching Franco-Russian conflict and the preparations in the Duchy for a European war caused public opinion to shift its interests as from the autumn of 1810 to another field, to that of the very existence of the Duchy, its expansion to the plane of a united Poland or its complete downfall.

Since the beginning of 1810, rumours had been received in Warsaw regarding some Franco-Russian agreement which would bar any possibility of restoring a united Poland, and there was talk of conversations between Prince Adam Czartoryski and the Tsar. The sudden change in the Napoleonic system and the magnificent ceremonies which marked the marriage with the Archduchess Marie Louise put quite another aspect on the situation; but the propositions alleged to have been made in the conversations exerted some in-

fluence on both sides of the frontier. The Prince had given up his ministerial portfolio in 1806 and his idea of reconstructing the whole of Poland by Russia and within the Russian Empire no longer bore the character of a governmental programme; in spite of this, he was still thought to have influence at the Russian court. Alexander's conversations with him yielded no results; described as confidential, they were none the less ostentatiously conducted (for it was in the spring of 1810) and were merely one of the modes followed by the Tsar to flirt with Poland without engaging himself too deeply.

Excitement began to run high in Poland, and war appeared to be virtually certain as from the spring of 1810. In January Alexander sent Czartoryski to Warsaw with instructions to feel the ground and gain the Polish army, for he really desired to throw it against France as the spearhead of his attack. The reward promised was a not very determinate promise to carry out the former Polish plans advanced by Czartoryski. The latter spoke with Prince Poniatowski on 15 February 1811, but the conversation proved abortive. The Polish commander-in-chief rejected the suggestions, revealed Alexander's intrigue to Napoleon and, under the pretext of attending the baptism of the King of Rome, proceeded to Paris for a thorough examination of the situation and to prepare a second war for the restoration of Poland. Poland's situation, between Russia and France, now became tragically clear. To the particularism produced in the community by social differences, there now were added more profound differences in political orientation pure and simple. On the one hand, there was the French orientation, in effect purely national, demanding action, sacrifices and efforts, whilst the body which most powerfully expressed this view was the army of the Duchy, the chief instrument for the modern civic upbringing not only of the peasant but also of the landed magnate, a centre of attraction for the youth of the nation upon the Polish territories held by Russia and Austria. The contrary orientation, towards Russia, was marked by passivity and legitimism, defence of vested social privileges, a specific Russian pan-Slavism; it counted on Great Britain and on her role in the expected crushing of Napoleon and in the future erection of a separate Polish State under the Russian Crown.

Much activity was shown by the partisans of the latter orientation. Prince Czartoryski had long retired from active participation in political affairs, and the leaders were men of smaller calibre—such as Ogiński, Wawrzecki, Lubecki, the two Platers, both Lubomirskis, and the landed magnates of the borderlands. Encouraged by the Tsar

from the spring of 1811, they now multiplied their efforts. They opposed the concept of the Duchy of Warsaw—a French Poland, as it were, based on the liberty of the subject—by holding out the prospect of a united Poland under the Russian Crown; they tried to secure relative autonomy for the eight western provinces of Russia, to maintain the dependence of the peasantry on the manors, and to arrange for some separate Polish military formations. Their emissaries developed their campaign from St Petersburg in the area of the Grand-Duchy of Lithuania, but with no success beyond increasing the confusion in men's hearts and minds.

It was under such conditions, aggravated by the crop failures in 1811, that the second Sejm of the Duchy assembled towards the end of the year. There had been a change at one of the key posts in the Cabinet: the new Minister of Finance was one of Czartoryski's men, the talented Matuszewicz, who had, however, to overcome the handicap bequeathed by the years of transition and deficit. The existing contrarieties exerted their baneful influence with greater force than ever. The poorer south of Poland opposed the preponderance of the richer west; the urban deputies defended their constituencies and the poorer classes against the efforts of the Government and the rural deputies to switch the main burdens on to them. All wished to reduce taxation, to effect economies, to simplify the administration and reduce its cost; and all opposed excessive haste in introducing further French laws; the Jacobins attacked the Government and aimed their darts against Łubieński. Former ministers intrigued against those in office; Łubieński tried to undermine the rising authority of Matuszewicz, who was obliged to reduce his budgetary estimates by nearly 25 per cent. The outcome of all these currents and cross-currents was, however, that unity gained the upper hand.

Life developed in the continual expectation of war; it became imperative consciously to submit to the pressure imposed by circumstances. The administrative reconstruction of the Duchy was not neglected, however. Faith existed—everybody wished to believe—in the all-powerful might of the French Emperor and in the union between the Polish cause and his person. No material sacrifices were grudged if only to strengthen the State, which was to serve as the nucleus for the restoration of the old Commonwealth. The nation waited feverishly, as if listening for the order to march. Łubieński wrote: "They are ceasing to complain here and hope is rising; this really warlike nation is forgetting all its disasters as hope of recovering its motherland appears." With the approach of spring, this feverish

atmosphere gained in intensity: the nation called for war—war was to be a remedy for all evil. Even the Jews in the towns were seized by the infection, although the country fell deeper and deeper into the morass of financial difficulties.

And in very fact, troops began to march through the devastated territories at the beginning of April 1812. Military requisitions and plundering, demands for supplies, arbitrary acts, arrears of taxation, officials' salaries unpaid, hasty preparation of stocks and supplies, horses and foodstuffs seized right and left, virtually the whole Polish army under orders to march—within the "Grand Army" of about 620,000 men more than 75,000 Poles were to serve under arms: such was the picture. Then, towards the middle of May, came the nerve-racking ordeal of awaiting a decision. After an outbreak of despair, the Government's resignation (unaccepted, although it admitted that the difficulties were greater than it could meet) and an over-long period of waiting, came a sudden, frantic enthusiasm in June. By-elections were held to return deputies to the Sejm which was convoked in Warsaw, and the guidance of public opinion was handed over to de Pradt, the French Ambassador. At length the pent-up feelings of the nation were relieved on 26 June in theatrical manner. The Sejm assembled finally with Prince Adam Czartoryski (Senior) in the Chair; Matuszewicz made a fiery speech under the slogan of "Poland will be—why, Poland is already!" which so acted on the members that they constituted themselves a General Confederation of the Kingdom, a nest of reactionary elements, a great instrument of propaganda for war—and then resigned the actual management of the country's fate to Napoleon.

After this short-lived and lost opportunity, after a moment of enthusiasm, the nation had to revert to the grim reality of life in a country which served merely to mark the stages of marches, both in the Duchy and in Lithuania. From boundless hope it suddenly passed to a singular struggle for a Poland consisting of two major divisions: Warsaw and Wilno. The dictatorship of the "coroneted clown" (de Pradt) was maintained in the Duchy, although he was in constant conflict with the Warsaw and the French authorities and held up all action by his incapacity. As from 1 July, Wilno was to be endowed with a Provisional Lithuanian Governing Commission, "simply to be the civil organ of Napoleon's occupational administration". All this was done amidst an atmosphere of ceaseless clashes between the French military and civil authorities and the persecution of the Polish population. To make matters worse, there came the

changing fortunes of war: news of victories, the capture of Moscow, the conflagration which consumed the Russian capital, the apparently complete downfall of Russia, and then a complete change in the situation, intrigues originating from Schwarzenberg's army corps stationed on Polish soil, and the quite unexpected appearance of Cossack detachments at the very frontier of the Duchy.

During September and October 1812, some of the ministers endeavoured to induce Napoleon to determine Poland's fate before the expected Franco-Russian negotiations. The suggestions from Warsaw (made through Wilno) advanced the idea of handing over to Napoleon a Poland consisting of the Duchy, part of Lithuania and part or all of Galicia, with its own constitution and Prince Adam Czartoryski (Junior) as viceroy. Then, when news was received of the disaster to the "Grand Army", and before Napoleon passed through Warsaw on his way to France (10 December), the ministers applied to Alexander with the proposal that the Duchy be incorporated within the Russian Empire with a separate constitution—that of 3 May 1791 or another. This was done at the beginning of December, without the knowledge of Poniatowski and during his absence. Prince Adam, prominent once more, undertook to transmit this proposal to the Tsar. "Some phantom has infected the hearts of all", wrote a contemporary. People fled from the villages to the towns, and from Warsaw to Poznań and Cracow. The desperate conviction now gained force that they were powerless under the sole influence of external forces—dependent on the vagaries of a "fate without bowels". A spirit of defeat flooded the community. The only ones unaffected by this mood were the remnants of the Polish army, now returning to Warsaw, decimated, but morally still strong.

Changes ensued in Warsaw. De Pradt was recalled, the Polish and the French authorities undertook energetic action to restore the man-power of the Polish troops. Napoleon replenished the depleted Treasury of the Duchy, sending 2 million francs in depreciated Piedmont currency (the "Sardinian" francs) and 1,500,000 roubles in *assignats*, which turned out to be forged. At the same time, he demanded fresh reinforcements. A sharp conflict broke out between Poniatowski and Schwarzenberg, as the latter refused to defend the capital, demanded the evacuation of the city and wished to withdraw, together with the Polish troops. Warsaw was, however, evacuated by the authorities on 4 February 1813, and four days later the Russians entered the city.

The Government, the Council of the General Confederation, the Lithuanian Commission, the military authorities, the civil offices and the Treasury were evacuated through Piotrków and Częstochowa to Cracow, where the final stage of the struggle for Poland's decision was to take place. It was Prince Poniatowski who was to have the last word in this matter.

Retreating towards Cracow with rather less than 20,000 men, Poniatowski had the demoralized Saxons on his right and the Austrians in his rear, while the Russians were close behind under Sachsen. He had to choose one of two alternatives upon reaching the old Polish capital. Fundamentally, all favoured the first: that he and the Polish army remain in the Duchy. The Austrians and Russians desired this, as it would lead to the destruction of the Polish army as a symbol of free Poland. Prince Czartoryski hoped to preserve it as the nucleus of a future Polish army which would fight in the ranks of the Coalition. The authorities at Warsaw, already secretly on the side of Russia, considered that the presence of the Polish army would support them in case of need. The country was groaning under an occupation which the departmental councils and the Central Committee formed by them in April 1813, and henceforth the only representative of Polish public opinion, could not relieve. The various Russian generals were impatient for a distribution of the loot seized in Poland. Russians, formerly considered friendly to the Polish cause, now became less certain. Finally, the Supreme Council, established in Warsaw by the Tsar, was merely an organ of occupation, although it contained some Poles, headed by Lubecki and Wawrzecki.

To make matters worse, intrigue was rife in Poniatowski's *entourage*. Mostowski, Matuszewicz and others conducted secret correspondence between Warsaw and Cracow. All thought of assuring themselves safety in the event of a final catastrophe. Some arranged to be sent abroad—to Dresden or Paris—and others took refuge in the rural areas. Even desertions amongst the officers began. The Commander-in-Chief remained alone, with none but Bignon, Napoleon's faithful *aide*, at his side, and with his soldiers. He long struggled against the intrigues to bring him over to the Russian side, against the conspiracies of those around him, and manfully fought against all the obstacles raised by the authorities of the Duchy, by the King of Saxony, and even by Napoleon himself. After a desperate struggle, having repelled thoughts of suicide, Prince Poniatowski decided to remain loyal to the Napoleonic solution. His firm attitude caused the Austrians to accept his terms, and on 12 May he left the



Duchy, to fight gallantly and die a soldier's death at the Battle of the Nations on 19 October 1813.

The Duchy of Warsaw really ceased to exist. It was ruled by the Russians. Part of the Polish authorities proceeded to Dresden and part returned to Warsaw. Again, all the differences of opinion appeared among the Polish leaders, in a country plundered and devastated by the Russian occupants, and racked by elemental disasters. In that hour of stress, the nation looked around for someone in whom it could place its trust.

The natural choice was of course Prince Adam Czartoryski, who appeared in Warsaw, followed the Tsar to Kalisz, returned to Warsaw, again joined the Tsar at Reichenbach (June 1813), and accompanied him from camp to camp of the Allies. The Prince did all that was possible to protect the Duchy and Lithuania from the rising tide of Russian violence, and tried to obtain some assurances from the Tsar for the future of Poland, but with no success.

He then made a firm decision to find some other allies. The radical grouping had long before (in 1801) suggested that Poland seek the support of Great Britain. Prince Czartoryski was bound by many ties of sentiment to Great Britain; he had studied in Edinburgh, and during his term of office had conducted an intimate correspondence with Fox, whilst he had during his stay in Russia been in close touch with Sir Charles Stewart and with Leveson-Gower, the British Ambassador. It was there, too, that a close friendship arose between him and General Robert T. Wilson which lasted to the very end. Prince Czartoryski corresponded with the Tsar in 1812-13 through the good offices of General Wilson, and these good offices also served after Czartoryski's unsuccessful attempt to establish contact with Cathcart, the British Ambassador, at Kalisz. General Wilson likewise helped him to renew his contacts with G. Jackson and Sir Charles Stewart. It was at the suggestion of the last-named that Czartoryski sent his secretary, F. Biernacki, on a secret mission to England in the autumn of 1813, and, without the knowledge of the Tsar, to prepare for the future decisive moves for the Polish cause during the coming peace negotiations. In this manner, the cause of Polish liberty passed from the plane of Franco-Russian affairs into that of the deliberations of the Allies and of the Anglo-Russian rivalry for spheres of influence.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

**A**FTER the disastrous retreat of Napoleon's Grand Army from Moscow in 1812, and the consequent downfall of the Napoleonic Duchy of Warsaw, it would not have been unnatural if a hard vengeance had been inflicted by Russia on the Poles for having thrown in their lot with the French. For their lenient treatment the Poles had to thank the Russian Emperor, Alexander, who still entertained ideas of the national regeneration of the former Polish Kingdom. But the jealousy of the Great Powers, coupled with the hatred of his own people for the Poles, had impelled him to hold his hand until Napoleon was overthrown. He had even veiled his real intentions when at Kalisz and at Reichenbach, in 1813, he had signed treaties with Prussia and with Austria which provided for a fresh partition of Polish territory. During the Allies' victorious progress, in the earlier part of 1814, the Polish question had been by general consent ignored, although its importance had not been overlooked; for when Alexander had shown himself unwilling to discuss it, on his visit to London in June 1814, it had been agreed to postpone it until the forthcoming Congress at Vienna, and it was realized that it would form at once the most prominent and the most delicate problem with which that assembly would have to deal. That Russia, who had overrun the Duchy with her troops, now to a great extent held the fortunes of Poland in her hands, was plain from the outset.

Throughout September 1814, there was a steady influx of visitors to Vienna in preparation for the Congress. Representatives of many of the leading Polish families naturally gravitated to the city where the fate of their country was to be decided. Foremost was the patriot Prince Adam Czartoryski, confidant and former Minister of the Tsar Alexander, who arrived at the beginning of October and was almost immediately put in charge of the negotiations concerning the Polish question by the Russian Emperor. The Poles made no secret of the fact that their hopes largely depended upon Czartoryski's influence with his Imperial master, and they were encouraged by the measure of confidence which Alexander openly reposed in him. They thought at first that he even might become their Viceroy. In this matter the Tsar

very soon ceased to act through his Foreign Minister, Count Nesselrode, who does not appear to have been consulted at all in the more delicate negotiations. This conduct somewhat surprised Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Minister and Plenipotentiary, who was unaccustomed to such a novel form of diplomatic intercourse. "The Emperor has latterly, on the question of Poland, ceased to act through his regular servants", Castlereagh wrote after they had been a few weeks in Vienna. "It is unfortunately his habit to be his own minister, and to select as the instrument of his immediate purpose the person who may happen to fall in most with his views. This has been particularly the case in the present question, all the Russians, I believe without an exception, being adverse to his projects, considering them both as dangerous to himself and injurious to his Allies."

The secret police kept Czartoryski under constant surveillance, but they could discover very little of value to them. According to one report, he despatched all his letters by a trusty servant, and made a point of personally destroying most of those which he received. He worked hard, and himself drafted the principal statements of the Tsar on the Polish question. In this he was assisted by two capable subordinates, M. Gross, his secretary, and Baron Anstedt, a German in the Russian diplomatic service. With the Polish patriots in Vienna he had little direct intercourse, and they usually had difficulty in obtaining access to him. His kinsman, Prince Henry Lubomirski, however, served as a useful intermediary between them. These Poles were in the habit of meeting at several Viennese houses, notably that of the Court Chamberlain, Count Ignatius Skarbek, at Nussdorf. The moving spirits in this patriotic band were Counts Stadnicki, Lankoroński, and Siemieński, Princess Sapieha, and Princess Lubomirska, who was an aunt of Czartoryski. They were accustomed also to assemble in great secrecy, at the house of a certain M. Stryczewski, and more openly at Countess Zielińska's, where the English who were interested in the future of Poland forgathered as well.

The other Poles entertained high hopes when they saw how Czartoryski was singled out for attention by the Tsar, whose promises they naturally looked to their leader to implement. They made no secret that their sole desire was to be re-established as an independent Kingdom, under any sovereign. It was rumoured that the Archduke Charles would become their King in the event of his marriage with the Tsar's sister, the Grand Duchess Catherine, or alternatively that Czartoryski himself would be appointed ruler. They counted, also, on the advocacy of Castlereagh, since England was known to desire the

restoration of Polish independence. However, they were speedily undeceived. Less than a fortnight after his arrival in Vienna Czartoryski informed them that the Tsar was unable to resist the united desires of the Austrian and Prussian Courts, and that he had consented to another partition. Prussia was to have the cities of Thorn and Posen, Austria was to have Cracow with adjacent territory including part of the salt mines of Wieliczka, while the remainder of Polish territory including the capital would go to Russia, who would preserve the title of the "Duchy of Warsaw" and also the constitution as confirmed at the last Diet. The Emperor, added Czartoryski, would exert all his efforts to retain as much territory as possible for the Duchy, and would only yield what he had stated to Prussia and Austria as a last resort. For the rest, however, there would be no question of an independent Kingdom of Poland.

An arrangement of this description had been in Alexander's mind for some time, and he came to Vienna with the declared intention of carrying it out. Meanwhile, as the representative of the sole disinterested Power at the Congress who was in a position to take up a point of view wholly European, it fell to the British Foreign Minister to argue the case for the Poles with the Tsar. This Castlereagh endeavoured to do at a number of interviews, supported by several weighty letters and memoranda.

From the beginning Castlereagh treated the Tsar with the utmost frankness, and, at their first interview, which took place on 26 September, the day after Alexander's arrival in Vienna, he told him that his plans were impossible. Great Britain, said Castlereagh, would view with great satisfaction the restoration of an independent Poland, but the Tsar's idea of a partial restoration under the Russian Crown was, to say the least of it, disquieting. Thiers in his *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire* gives the following summary of Castlereagh's argument on this point:

The partition of Poland, he told the Tsar, was a crime, and it was not England, who had always opposed it, that would now assert the contrary. She was therefore prepared to consent to the restoration of Poland, if it were done completely, honestly, and with suitable conditions. If, for example, Austria, Russia, and Prussia gave up the Polish provinces they held, and an independent Kingdom was formed with a Polish King—and if not a Pole, at least somebody not under the control of either of the three sovereigns who now shared the country between them—and if, in addition, the new Kingdom would be endowed with liberal monarchical institutions, England was ready to approve and even to assist in the work at any expense to herself.

But would the three partitioning Powers consent to such sacrifices?

Would a suitable King be found? And finally, would the reunited Poles live together in amity and comport themselves like a rational people worthy of the liberty conferred on them? This was not only doubtful, but almost impossible, and the much talked of reconstitution of Poland was a fallacy—a mere dream.

If instead of this restoration, complete and European, a false and incomplete Kingdom were to be formed, called Poland for the sake of increasing its extent as much as possible, whilst in reality it belonged to Russia, this would be a mere illusion, to which Europe would never submit.

So great a change as Alexander contemplated could not, Castlereagh argued, be effected without troublesome consequences in the districts ceded to Prussia and Austria. For if the Russian Poles were satisfied with their lot, those Poles under Prussia and Austria would be discontented. Russia could then count not only upon the strength of her own ten million Polish subjects, but also upon the five million Poles subject to Prussian and Austrian rule who would continually be looking to their own compatriots for sympathy and assistance. "It was obvious", went on the British Minister, "that such a state of things must not only sow distrust and jealousy between the three Powers, but destroy, in a double or triple ratio, their proportional strength as derived from Polish acquisitions, whilst it must give birth to a political fermentation which could only end in separation." Then, too, there was the repugnance which the Tsar's own subjects would feel to the measure, not to mention the difficulties which the Tsar would have in controlling two such rival interests within his Empire. Even if Alexander was able, through his personal influence, to maintain the system during his own reign, Castlereagh could not help feeling that it would not last. The British Minister's words were indeed singularly prophetic. "It would probably be deliberately destroyed, or perish in the hands of a successor."

After a short interval Castlereagh reinforced his arguments by a letter in which he appealed to the Tsar's magnanimity. The following characteristic passage summarizes the British attitude.

Vienna, 12 October 1814.

I should press these considerations with the more reluctance if I did not feel persuaded that there is a course open to your Imperial Majesty to pursue, which will combine your beneficent intentions towards your Polish subjects with what your Allies and Europe, Sire, claim at your hands. They desire not to see the Poles humiliated, or deprived of a mild, conciliatory, and congenial system of administration. They desire, not that your Imperial

Majesty should enter into any engagements restrictive of your sovereign authority over your own provinces; they only wish you, Sire, for the sake of peace, to ameliorate gradually the frame of your Polish administration, and to avoid, if you are not prepared for the complete reunion and independence of Poland, that species of measure which, under a title of higher import, may create alarm both in Russia and the neighbouring States, and which, however it may gratify the ambition of a few individuals of great family in Poland, may, in fact, bring less of real liberty and happiness to the people than a more measured and unostentatious change in the system of their administration.

This letter was accompanied by a memorandum in which the British Minister further set out at length the views of his Government. He handed both documents to the Tsar personally at their next interview, which took place on 13 October. Alexander showed, on this occasion, that he had in no way shifted his position, although he employed some fresh and novel arguments in an attempt to justify it. One of them was that, in Castlereagh's words, "by thus establishing a Polish Kingdom, he would create a balance and check upon Russian power—that Russia, as at present constituted, was too large, but that when the Russian Provinces were united under a free system, and his Russian army withdrawn beyond the Niemen, Europe would have nothing to fear". To this the British Minister very properly replied that "the question for Europe was the gross amount of his force, and that far from being tranquillized by this species of distribution, they would consider it only as a means to call forth the military energies of Poland in his support, by flattering the pride of the nation".

In the course of this interview Castlereagh referred to the claims of Austria under the Treaty of Reichenbach, which the Emperor appeared to have forgotten. After some reflection Alexander attempted to bring his plan within the framework of this treaty by stating that he intended to cede half the salt mines of Wieliczka to Austria, "an object too trifling to deserve notice", as Castlereagh afterwards reported, "much less to be put forward in satisfaction of such an engagement". Beaten upon this argument, the Tsar again took shelter under his moral duty, "that if it was merely a question of territory, he would yield it without a struggle, but that it involved the happiness of the Poles, and the people would never forgive his ceding them". Castlereagh thereupon asked Alexander "how he distinguished between his duty to the Poles on one side of his line and on the other, and that, where he could not satisfy his principle without denying even to Prussia any share, he should not do violence to his engagements with Austria to please the Poles". This line of reasoning was

developed also in the memorandum on the Polish question submitted to Alexander at this interview:

...Can it be supposed that when Austria and Prussia stipulated for the *dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw*, they would have agreed to the more dangerous revival of it in a Polish kingdom under the Crown of Russia, an arrangement tenfold more menacing and alarming to their respective states? If the words of the treaty were as ambiguous as they are plain and conclusive, no person could possibly give such a construction to them as that these two Powers, who were then making engagements for the delivery of Europe, were induced to embrace that cause by covenanting their own disgrace and military exposure to a powerful neighbour....

It is a matter of no less difficulty to conceive how the annexation to the Russian empire of almost the whole Duchy of Warsaw, the erecting it into a kingdom, together with the Polish provinces now under Russian dominion, can be regarded as a moral duty. Surely it can never be a moral duty to act in violation of the most sacred treaties; and if His Imperial Majesty is seriously impressed with the necessity of ameliorating the condition of the Poles distinct from views of territorial extension, it is submitted that the power is sufficiently in his hands at present with regard to the numerous inhabitants of the Russian provinces taken from Poland, together with his fair proportion of the Duchy of Warsaw; and that for an experiment of such a nature, however beneficent, it cannot be necessary to attempt an aggrandisement of his empire so enormous and so menacing as that proposed, an empire at present amply sufficient for every purpose of ambition, and more than sufficient for the purposes of good government, at the expense of the present character and future security of his allies, and in contravention of his own engagements, and of those principles of justice and moderation which he has so repeatedly declared to be the sole motives of his conduct, and by which his conduct, as to France, upon the late peace was so eminently regulated.

Beaten again, Alexander could only fall back upon the argument of force, with which he brought the discussion to a close. In short he plainly hinted that the Polish question "could only end in one way, as he was in possession". It was in vain for Castlereagh to point out that Great Britain had not acted upon this principle, but had freely surrendered her colonial conquests in order to help in the work of European reconstruction. The Emperor remained unshaken in his opinion. The truth was that there were already over 200,000 Russian troops in occupation of the Duchy, and Warsaw had become the headquarters of the Russian army.

Meanwhile the Tsar, in an interview with Prince Talleyrand, the French Minister, and also with Prince von Hardenberg, the Prussian representative, had used even more threatening language, plainly stating that he intended to keep almost the whole of the Duchy of

Warsaw. "Rather war than to renounce what I possess", he said to Talleyrand. "I have 200,000 men in Poland; let them come and chase me from it." Similarly in an interview which the Tsar had at this time with Lord Stewart, the British Ambassador in Vienna and Castlereagh's brother, Alexander "alluded rather in a menacing manner to his present military occupation of Poland, and seemed to be certain of the facility with which he could retain it." On the other hand Castlereagh was hoping to persuade Prussia and Austria to unite with Great Britain in refusing to recognize Poland as Russian territory. But this plan depended upon the cession of Saxony by Austria to Prussia, an arrangement to which Austria had so far not shown herself as eager to consent. Castlereagh, who had drafted his memorandum on the Polish question as much for the guidance of the Prussian and Austrian Ministers as for the Tsar's benefit, accordingly endeavoured to devise a method whereby the union of Prussia and Austria to this end might be achieved.

His first move was to have an audience of King Frederick William, at which he pressed the Prussian monarch to "oppose every obstacle short of arms to an arrangement which left his provinces uncovered and his State in obvious dependence upon another Power". But he met with no success at this interview, for, although Frederick William disapproved of the Tsar's intentions with regard to Poland, he was unwilling to risk a rupture with such a powerful ally. With Prince Hardenberg, however, Castlereagh made better progress, in spite of the fact that, like his master, the Prussian Minister appeared uneasy and distrustful. But Hardenberg did agree, if somewhat reluctantly, to unite with Austria and Great Britain in opposing the Tsar's Polish policy, if these Powers would guarantee the incorporation of Saxony in Prussia, together with the establishment of Mainz as a fortress of the German Federation. When he approached Prince Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, Castlereagh at first found him unwilling to commit himself, but eventually, after he had seen Hardenberg, Metternich agreed to co-operate.

Hardenberg formally requested the cession of Saxony on 9 October, and Castlereagh immediately replied giving his consent. Metternich still hesitated to commit himself in writing. According to Lord Stewart, the Tsar told the Austrian Chancellor in an interview that he intended to keep virtually the whole of Poland, and Metternich offered no objections. Metternich's procrastination was accentuated by the many social distractions of the Congress which, as its President, the Austrian Chancellor felt bound to superintend in person. Castle-



reagh therefore grew impatient and suspected that Metternich was playing a double game. "The whole arrangement stands still on the point of Poland," he wrote to the Prince Regent on 20 October, "and as yet the Russian Emperor has evinced no disposition to accommodate. We are also impeded by the succession of fêtes and private balls; they waste a great deal of valuable time, and prevent Prince Metternich from giving his mind to the subjects that ought to engross him." Finally, on being strongly pressed by Hardenberg, Metternich signified provisional assent, on 22 October, to the cession of Saxony, but he withheld agreement on the point of Mainz, to which he asserted the claims of Bavaria. This did not satisfy Hardenberg, and it was only by getting the two ministers to a meeting at his house on the following day that Castlereagh at last succeeded in persuading them to agree.

Castlereagh now propounded his plan to isolate Russia. He had already seen Prince Talleyrand, and had effectually prevented any *rapprochement* between the French Minister and the Tsar, so he now felt that the stage was set for effecting a united refusal of the Powers to recognize the Polish acquisitions which Alexander contemplated. Alexander was about to set out, with the Austrian Emperor Francis and the Prussian King, on a visit to Budapest. On reaching this destination he was to be presented with the allied front. In the event of his proving obdurate, he was to be threatened with an appeal to the Congress which had been summoned to meet formally on 1 November, when "it would rest with the Powers in Congress assembled to decide upon the measures which should be called for by so alarming an infraction of Treaties, and by an encroachment upon the military security of independent and neighbouring Allied States in contravention of the express stipulations of subsisting engagements."

It was a boldly conceived plan; but, unfortunately for Poland, the British Minister made the fatal mistake of not being on the spot when the attempt was made to put it into operation. Neither had he correctly reckoned on the sway which Alexander had over King Frederick William. During the visit to Hungary, Alexander increased his influence over the Prussian monarch. On their return to Vienna, Hardenberg was summoned to meet them, and the Tsar launched a furious attack upon him in the presence of his master. The result was that Frederick William gave way, and forbade his Minister to act further with Austria and Great Britain as had been agreed. By this means the project of an appeal to the Powers in Congress was defeated, and the British Minister's designs on behalf of Poland circumvented.

During his short absence in Hungary, the Tsar had instructed Czartoryski to draft a reply to Castlereagh's communication of 12 October, and this was accordingly despatched on 30 October, immediately on Alexander's return to Vienna. The Tsar showed that he was not disturbed by Castlereagh's charges of breaking faith. The Treaty of 1797, on which the British Minister had based part of his case, had been "cancelled by circumstances", while the stipulations of those of 1813 were *purement éventuelles*, and in view of the considerable acquisitions made by Austria and Prussia, in his judgment no longer applied. The British Minister had a ready answer to these arguments. They disclosed, he said on 4 November, "maxims of public law perfectly novel in themselves, and subversive of every received principle of confidence and good faith between States." As for the Tsar's contention that the treaties of 1813 were *éventuelles*—*éventuelles* upon what? Apparently "upon this extraordinary principle that there being more than ample means to satisfy the treaty, a new right accrued to Russia, another party to the treaty, to decide according to her pleasure whether Austria should obtain the object stipulated, or accept, in lieu of it, what Russia deems an equivalent at the opposite extremity of her dominions. It is a new position in public law that the obligations of a treaty shall be equally dissolved and defeated by success and by failure. If Buonaparte had triumphed, the Emperor of Austria would have lost his Polish frontiers, and probably his own. The Allies prevailed, and he is equally doomed to lose his Polish frontier. On what security will treaties rest if they can be thus constructively annulled?"

Castlereagh despatched his written statement by the hand of his brother Stewart, the British Ambassador in Vienna. After waiting for a day to gain an audience of the Tsar, Stewart had a stormy interview on 6 November, at which Alexander at first refused to receive Castlereagh's communication at all. "The last memoir and letter gave me a great deal of pain", Alexander told the British Ambassador, "and I do not like to subject myself to a paper communication to which I can see no end. Such communications should go through Count Nesselrode, and I must decline receiving it." Furthermore a correspondence between a Foreign Minister of a Power and the Sovereign of another Power was "out of the usual course". However, the Tsar did finally consent to accept the communication on receiving Stewart's assurance that it contained nothing likely to hurt his *amour propre*. Before concluding the interview the Tsar reiterated his views, stating, somewhat to Stewart's surprise, that the

Emperor of Austria had only very lately promised never to take up arms against him. "While Austria is putting you forward", he said, "she is making overtures underhand to me that, provided I will sacrifice Prussia and give up supporting her on Saxony, she will enter into all my objects relative to Poland." Finally, the possibility of an open conflict was expressed on both sides.

The Tsar could well afford on his side to be frank with the British Ambassador, for he was fully aware of the strength of his position and the certainty of his plans with regard to Poland being fulfilled. He had succeeded, through his personal supremacy over the Prussian King, in driving a wedge between the two German Powers, and thereby defeating Castlereagh's loftily conceived plan of a united front against Russia at the Congress table. Metternich, of course, stoutly denied the charges which the Tsar had made to Stewart of Austria's double dealing offer to bargain Poland against Saxony, but it was too late to patch up the Austro-Prussian understanding. Alexander's intentions were now generally known, and they were, in a certain measure, implemented by the departure for Warsaw with military reinforcements of the Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, who had now been designated Viceroy. When Metternich represented to Alexander that this move was "contrary to the treaties signed at Paris and the equilibrium of Europe", the Russian Emperor replied that he would insist on it and that "he did not know any other equilibrium than *that* (striking his sword)". With Castlereagh the Tsar was equally frank. "*Je donnerai ce qu'il faut à la Prusse, mais je ne donnerai pas un village à l'Autriche*", he said more than once. "*J'ai conquis le Duché et j'ai 480,000 hommes à le garder.*" In his reply of 21 November to the British Minister's last communication which, it will be remembered, had been received with considerable reluctance, he stressed the importance to Russia that Polish unrest should be terminated. The Russian Emperor also observed for Castlereagh's personal benefit that a mediator was only useful in a discussion if he tried to conciliate; otherwise he had better leave the parties concerned alone.

Castlereagh, who was being pressed by his Government at home not to risk popular discredit in England by resisting the Tsar's demands on the principle of partition, thereupon ceased for the time being to play an active part in the negotiations and his place as mediator was taken by Hardenberg. But the Prussian Minister's chances of success with the Russian Emperor were even more slender than the British had been. He did, however, put forward a plan of settlement which

comprised considerable cessions of Alexander's Polish territory. He proposed that Prussia should receive Thorn and the line of the river Warta, while Austria, in addition to the circle of Zamość, should have Cracow and the line of the river Nida as a frontier. It was added that, in the event of the Emperor consenting to this territorial rearrangement, Prussia and Austria were prepared to acquiesce in his project of a Polish Kingdom under the Russian Crown.

After some delay, caused by Alexander's being confined to his apartments with erysipelas in one of his feet, the Tsar intimated through Czartoryski that the only concession he was prepared to make on the Polish frontier was that Thorn and Cracow should be free towns. At the same time the Tsar insisted that Saxony should be given to Prussia and Mainz should become a fortress of the Confederation. Metternich, of course, could not accept this proposal, as his offer of Saxony to Prussia, it will be remembered, depended upon Prussian co-operation against Alexander. The Austrian Chancellor thereupon withdrew his offer as to Saxony, and the Powers found themselves early in December at a deadlock.

For the next few weeks, the Polish Question made no headway, while Castlereagh stood aside, and the representatives of Austria and Prussia wrangled and talked of war. Finally, about Christmas, the two Emperors met, and, after some discussion, it was agreed to refer matters to a formal conference, at which the Tsar appointed Count Razumovsky to act as Russian plenipotentiary. Castlereagh, on being invited, consented to attend, but made it clear that he was still opposed to the principle of partition, however the arrangement might be justified on the grounds of expediency. At the first meeting, which took place on 29 December, Hardenberg bluntly demanded Saxony for his country as a prelude to further discussion, and intimated that refusal on the part of Austria would be considered as tantamount to a declaration of war. This impelled Castlereagh to lose no time in taking Talleyrand, as well as Metternich, into his confidence, and the result was the signing of the famous secret treaty of 3 January 1815, between the three Powers—Great Britain, Austria and France. Prussia thereupon climbed down, there was no further talk of war, and the conferences proceeded, France being permitted to join in.

"I am convinced that the only hope of tranquillity now in Poland", wrote Castlereagh on 11 January 1815, to Liverpool, the British Prime Minister, "and especially of preserving to Austria and Prussia their portions of that Kingdom, is for the two latter states to adopt a Polish system of administration as a defence against the inroads

of the Russian policy". At the same time Castlereagh circulated a note to the other plenipotentiaries, in which he appealed to the three monarchs concerned to treat their prospective Polish dominions as separate parts of their realms, and further recapitulated the views of the British Government.

Vienna, 12 January 1815.

...The undersigned, His Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Plenipotentiary to the Congress of Vienna, in desiring the present Note concerning the affairs of Poland may be entered on the Protocol, has no intention to revive controversy, or to impede the progress of the arrangements now in contemplation.

His only object is to avail himself of this occasion, of temperately recording, by the express orders of his Court, the sentiments of the British Government upon an European Question of the utmost magnitude and importance.

The undersigned has had occasion in the course of the discussions at Vienna, for reasons that need not now be gone into, repeatedly and earnestly to oppose himself, on the part of his Court, to the erection of a Polish Kingdom in union with, and making part of, the Imperial Crown of Russia.

The desire of his Court to see an independent Power, more or less considerable in extent, established in Poland under a distinct Dynasty, and as an intermediate State between the 3 great Monarchies, has uniformly been avowed; and if the undersigned has not been directed to press such a measure, it has only arisen from a disinclination to excite, under all the apparent obstacles to such an arrangement, expectations which might prove an unavailing source of discontent among the Poles.

The Emperor of Russia continuing, as it is declared, still to adhere to his purpose of erecting that part of the Duchy of Warsaw, which is to fall under His Imperial Majesty's Dominion, together with his other Polish Provinces, either in whole or in part, into a Kingdom, under the Russian sceptre, and their Austrian and Prussian Majesties, the Sovereigns most immediately interested, having ceased to oppose themselves to such an arrangement; the undersigned, adhering nevertheless to all his former representations on this subject, has only sincerely to hope that none of those evils may result from this measure, to the tranquillity of the North, and to the general equilibrium of Europe, which it has been his painful duty to anticipate. But in order to obviate as far as possible such consequences, it is of essential importance to establish the public tranquillity, throughout the territories which formerly constituted the Kingdom of Poland, upon some solid and liberal basis of common interest, by applying to all, however various may be their political institutions, a congenial and conciliatory system of administration.

Experience has proved, that it is not by counteracting all their habits and usages as a people, that either the happiness of the Poles, or the peace of that important portion of Europe, can be preserved. A fruitless attempt, too long persevered in, by institutions foreign to their manners and sentiments to make them forget their existence and even language as a people,

has been sufficiently tried and failed. It has only tended to excite a sentiment of discontent and self-degradation, and can never operate otherwise, than to provoke commotion, and to awaken them to a recollection of past misfortunes.

The undersigned, for these reasons, and in cordial concurrence with the general sentiments which, he has had the satisfaction to observe, the respective Cabinets entertain on this subject ardently desires that the illustrious Monarchs, to whom the destinies of the Polish Nation are confided, may be induced before they depart from Vienna to take an engagement with each other to treat as Poles, under whatever form of political institution they may think fit to govern them, the portions of that Nation that may be placed under their respective Sovereignities. The knowledge of such a determination will best tend to conciliate the general sentiment to their rule, and to do honour to the several Sovereigns in the eyes of their respective Governments.

If such should happily be the result, the object which His Royal Highness the Prince Regent has most at heart, namely the happiness of that people, will have been secured; and it will only remain for His Royal Highness most anxiously to hope, that none of those dangers to the liberties of Europe may ever be realized, which might justly be apprehended from the reunion of a powerful Polish Monarchy with the still more powerful Empire of Russia, if at any time hereafter the military force of both should be directed by an ambitious and warlike Prince.

The three Powers all sent replies approving the sentiments expressed in this circular note, but they took care not to commit themselves specifically on any point. Metternich went further when he expressed his eagerness "to prove the anxiety of the House of Austria at all times to uphold the independence of the National Government of Poland", and this language so alarmed the Tsar that it was necessary to secure the intervention of the Duke of Wellington, who had come out to Vienna to relieve Castlereagh, with a view to its modification. Prussia, who like Austria hoped for some rectification of the Polish frontier in her own interest, was likewise ready to pay lip service to the principle of Polish independence. Russia in the person of the Tsar had, of course, already agreed.

In pleading his duty towards the Poles, as Alexander so often did in his interviews with Castlereagh and others in Vienna, there is no doubt that the Tsar was acting genuinely. His policy in this direction was governed by an honest desire to contribute to the welfare of the Poles, and it certainly ran contrary to the advice of his official ministers and the wishes of the Russian people. To Count Pozzo di Borgo, for instance, who warned him of the dangers which must come from granting the half-measure of independence which he proposed, he descanted "with eyes aflame, and in the tone of one inspired, on the

injustices so long committed against this poor Poland". When, therefore, later in February, in order to facilitate the general European re-arrangement, and in particular to compensate Prussia for her losses elsewhere, Castlereagh proposed further concessions, it was natural for the Tsar to revert to his old argument. It was only when the British Minister urged that Polish discontent could easily be overcome by uniting more of Russian Poland to the new kingdom, that Alexander yielded to the extent of agreeing to cede Thorn and a *rayon* round it to Frederick William. With what Prussia already possessed, this district united to form Poznan, or the Grand Duchy of Posen.

Now that the main difficulties had been overcome, negotiations proceeded swiftly with regard to the final settlement of Poland. This was in fact reduced to articles and placed on protocols ready to be inserted in the general Treaty before Castlereagh left Vienna for England in the middle of February. Thus the dramatic news of Napoleon's escape from Elba, which astonished the Congress three weeks later, had no effect upon this phase of its deliberations, although it did without doubt quicken the hopes of certain Polish patriots. With the exception of the territories designated for Prussia and Austria, and with the exception also of Cracow and its neighbourhood, which was to become independent, it was now agreed that the remainder of the Duchy of Warsaw should be united to the Russian Empire and at the same time erected into a constitutional Kingdom with the Russian Emperor as King. "His Imperial Majesty", so ran the first article, "reserves to himself to give this State, enjoying a distinct administration, the interior improvement which he shall judge proper." Furthermore, the Poles who were subjects of Prussia and Austria as well as Russia were to obtain "a Representation and National Institutions regulated according to the degree of political consideration that each of the Governments to which they belong shall judge expedient and proper to grant them".

As has been stated above, the portion of the Duchy designated for Prussia was to be known as the Grand Duchy of Posen. The dividing line proceeded from the frontier of Eastern Prussia to the village of Neuhoft, hence roughly speaking following the course of the river Drewenz (the frontier which existed from the First Partition to the Peace of Tilsit) to the village of Leibitz near Thorn. Passing the Vistula near Szczytno, the agreed frontier continued through Powidz and Słupca to the point of confluence of the rivers Warta and Proana; thence it proceeded slightly to the west of Kalisz and, following the river Proana, on to Pitschin.

Austria was to retain Galicia and, in addition, to have the districts which had been separated from Eastern Galicia, in consequence of the Treaty of Vienna in 1809, restored to her by the Tsar. These included the Circles of Złoczów, Brzeżany, Tarnopol, and Zaleszczyki, but not Zamość, which had also been under discussion. Austria was also to have the salt mines of Wieliczka with the surrounding territory.

Cracow was declared to be free, neutral, and independent, under the protection of Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Adjacent territory, including the town of Podgórze, to the extent of about 2000 square miles, was to be included with the Free City in the enjoyment of these privileges.

Provision was also made for the free navigation of rivers in Poland. Finally, a general amnesty was to be granted, and all sequestrations and confiscations of property were to be annulled, with the exception only of those sentences which had been fully executed and had not been cancelled by subsequent events. Lithuania and the Ruthenian Palatinates, it should be added, the spoil of former partitions, continued to be incorporated in Russia; and it was only the remnant of the former Duchy of Warsaw that formed the so-called Congress Kingdom.

The articles on which the above arrangements were based were first embodied in three treaties, which were signed by the representatives of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, on 3 May 1815. Prince Metternich signed on behalf of Austria, Prince Hardenberg for Prussia, and Count Razumovsky for Russia. The principal articles were later incorporated in the Congress Treaty which was signed by representatives of all the Powers in the Austrian Foreign Office in the Ballhausplatz on 9 June 1815.

Czartoryski, who, although he was not a signatory to any of these treaties, had played a conspicuous part in drawing them up, naturally defended the new arrangement, and was heartened by the constitutional hopes which it held out for the Polish people. "His Majesty, after much consideration", he wrote at this time, "has arrived at the conclusion that the plan he proposes would be the best in the interest of Europe generally. By it he would keep acquisitions which he cannot give up, but he would so organize his possessions as to secure peace to his neighbours and to Europe. Suppose the name of the Kingdom of Poland is restored, and part of the Duchy of Warsaw is re-united to Russia. This would not in any sense be dangerous to Austria or Prussia, for the Emperor would guarantee to them the possession of their parts of Poland, and the slightest attempt to recover



them would be opposed by Austria, Prussia, France, and England, leaving Russia entirely isolated."

Czartoryski was further encouraged by the forthcoming proof of Alexander's expressed intention to implement his promise of a Polish constitution. Before the end of May the Tsar issued a proclamation stating the chief points of the constitution to be granted to the new Kingdom in conformity with the new treaties. It established a Diet of two Houses, a responsible Ministry, liberty of the press, and freedom from arbitrary arrest; and stipulated that all administrative officials should be Poles, and that Polish should be the official language. Alexander was to be King of Poland and to be represented by a Viceroy in the new Kingdom. "In assuming the title of King of Poland", he wrote to Count Ostrowski, the President of the Senate, "I desire to satisfy the wish of the nation. The Kingdom of Poland will be united to the Russian Empire by the bonds of its own constitution. If the supreme interest of a general peace has made it impossible for all the Poles to be united under one sceptre, I have made it a point to soften the rigours of that separation, and to secure for them everywhere a peaceful enjoyment of their nationality." At the same time a provisional Government was formed in Warsaw, and Alexander appointed Czartoryski as its head.

On the eve of his departure from Vienna to take up his new duties in Poland, the Tsar sent Czartoryski the following communication:

Vienna, 13/25 May, 1815.

During the time you have passed here with me, you have had an opportunity of knowing my intentions as to the institutions which it is my will to establish in Poland, and the improvements I desire to introduce in that country. You will take care never to lose sight of them in the deliberations of the Council, and to draw the full attention of your colleagues to them, in order that the action of the Government and the reforms which it is bound to carry out may be in accordance with my views. You will not fail, if necessary, to take the initiative in this respect, so as to hasten the progress of your task and bring forward bills in conformity with the system which has been adopted.

As you are equally acquainted with my ideas as to the spirit in which I wish the selection of the various officials to be made, you will not fail to see that this is done in accordance with them. In a country which has so long been tossed about by disturbances and revolutions, it is of the highest importance that a uniform and well combined course should be pursued. This is what I wanted to recall to your mind once more by this letter, which I allow you even to show, so as to add confirmation to what you will have to say in order to carry out my intentions.

Alexander.

These instructions naturally raised Polish hopes, both in Vienna and in Warsaw, when they became known, for it now plainly appeared that Czartoryski was the instrument chosen to fulfil the Tsar's stated intentions with regard to the new Kingdom. It seemed not without significance too that the veteran patriot, Kościuszko, should have appeared in Vienna at this time to plead the national cause with the Tsar before the Congress officially dispersed. True, he was travelling incognito and no longer wore Polish dress, but he had interviews both with the Emperor and his principal Polish adviser, and it was stated that he was shortly proceeding to Warsaw to preach, as the wits said, "the Gospel according to Alexander". Actually he did not make this journey. Czartoryski, on the other hand, although he exerted himself considerably more than Kościuszko, soon found that his efforts on behalf of the Polish people met with a similar lack of success.

Czartoryski arrived in Warsaw as the Congress of Vienna was breaking up. His first reports to his master were not unencouraging. The Grand Duke Constantine had made himself extremely unpopular by censuring Colonel Siemieński in severe terms at a review in Warsaw. "The general impression at the promulgation of the new Constitution has been as favourable as could be desired", he wrote in June. "Its principles have attached the people to your Majesty, and after the long period of your waiting and the conduct of the Grand Duke, the grant of the Constitution was necessary to produce such a result. The change in the Polish arms and the interference of the Russians with the Government have caused some pain, but the bases of the Constitution have made the people forget everything."

Unfortunately, even before the Tsar left Vienna, the prospects which he had held out to the Poles of an enlightened government under the new constitution were completely spoiled by the tyrannical behaviour of his brother the Viceroy. "His Highness the Grand Duke is not to be moved by any zeal or submission", reported Czartoryski to the Emperor soon after his first letter. "He seems to have taken a dislike to the country which is increasing in alarming progression, and is the subject of his daily conversation. Neither the army, the nation, nor individuals find any favour in his eyes. The constitution, especially, is made by him a subject of incessant sarcasm; everything that is matter of law or regulation he scorns and covers with ridicule, and unhappily his words have already been followed by deeds. He does not even adhere to the military laws which he has himself confirmed." For instance, the Grand Duke Constantine insisted upon introducing flogging into the army, and he also issued a decree which gave him

power to try any citizen by court martial. "The Provisional Government", urged Czartoryski on July 17, "cannot but recognize that such proceedings are contrary to the rules established in all countries for the public peace and security, and that they are especially in direct opposition to the Constitution which your Majesty has just granted to the country....Under these circumstances all the members of the Government are unanimously of opinion that the above facts should be laid before you with a view to your Majesty placing your Government in a position to carry out your will."

It was in such scarcely auspicious circumstances as these that the so-called Congress Kingdom came into being under the aegis of Europe. The Russian Emperor had gained his main object. Poland had become in effect his vassal-state, and the principle of Polish independence had been recognized in theory by the Powers, although they did not in fact seriously contemplate the possibility of making any substantial sacrifices in its defence. "I know", said Castlereagh on 20 March 1815, in his speech to the House of Commons in which he defended the treaty arrangements to which he had been a party on behalf of Great Britain at Vienna, "that it was the wish of a vast number of persons in this country, and, I believe, in Poland, that it should be erected into a separate State to maintain its own rank and independence in Europe; but such was not the wish of all. It was found inconsistent with several of the other great Powers of Europe; and the House must be aware that such a plan could not be carried into effect without the complete and general concurrence of all the parties interested." On the other hand, the promises which the British Minister extracted from the three Eastern Powers to treat their Polish dominions as separate parts of their realms, and which were repeated in the treaties respecting the new Kingdom, showed a considerable advance on previous conditions. Furthermore, when the system which Alexander initiated was destroyed by the hands of his successors later in the century, as indeed Castlereagh had foretold to the Tsar that it would be, these undertakings were to serve as the basis for the protests of Great Britain and France, and they were to keep alive in the hearts of the two Western Powers abundant sympathy for the oppressed Poles.

## CHAPTER XIII

### A. THE POLISH KINGDOM, 1815-1830

THE occupied territory of the Duchy of Warsaw was placed under a Temporary Supreme Council (14 March 1813). This was composed of General Lanskoj (President) with Novosiltsov, two Poles, Lubecki and Wawrzecki, who had succeeded Kościuszko in 1794, and the Prussian Colomba. But the whole land was subjected to lawful and unlawful extortion, somewhat regulated from April 1814. The Polish army returned. Under the Grand Duke Constantine first a military and then a civil committee were formed, to prepare the future organization of the country. Meanwhile the fate of Poland was decided at Vienna. The Final Act of 9 June 1815 formed a Polish Kingdom of about 127,000 square kilometres and 3,200,000 people. The western districts of the Duchy fell to Prussia, while Cracow, with about 1000 kilometres and 95,000 people, became a free city.

The "Principles of the Constitution of the Polish Kingdom", drawn up by Prince Adam Czartoryski, were issued in Vienna on 25 May 1815. They proclaimed the independent structure of the new Kingdom, while so far as possible preserving the arrangements of the Duchy and defining the executive power. The judicature was to be independent; the national character of the new Kingdom and the rights of its citizens were guaranteed; the equitable solution of the peasant and Jewish questions was promised. In accordance with the imperial decree of 20 May, the Kingdom was proclaimed in Warsaw, on 20 June 1815. The old Council, in which Prince Adam replaced Colomba, became the Temporary Government, with nominal power over the nascent State. Thanks to the initiative of Czartoryski, the preliminary work began, and produced a glowing sense of progress. Alexander I arrived, to be greeted with enthusiasm by the crowd, by high society and by the bishops. The memory of this first sojourn of a Polish King in his new capital was enshrined in St Alexander's Church in Warsaw. Alexander busied himself in elaborating the constitution, in confirming the organic statutes, in revising the organization of government and in nominating the first high officials.

A constitution in seven chapters and 165 articles was the fruit of long labours in which the chief Polish participants were L. Plater, Czartoryski, Szaniawski and Ignatius Sobolewski. Of the Russians,

Novosiltsov, who more and more gained influence over the Tsar, and Alexander himself showed most activity. While following the principles of Czartoryski, the constitution diverged from them in two respects. Socially, it sacrificed entirely the peasant and Jewish questions, and politically, it designedly left gaps and silences which might enable the autocracy of the King-Emperor to limit the rights of his Polish people.

The constitutional statute was expressly and categorically an "octroyé" or "granted" charter. The connection between the Polish Kingdom and Russia was simply proclaimed in its first article. The statute safeguarded the liberty of the citizens and guaranteed to "the Polish people", as subjects of the Polish Kingdom, full independence and a separate political structure. "Relations of external policy", however, were to be managed in common with those of the tsardom. Article 31 provided for the representation of the people in a diet of the King and two houses, while Chapter VI entrusted the defence of everything touching its nationality to its own armed force, consisting of an active army and a militia, which might not be used outside Europe. This possessed a badge of its independence unforeseen in the statute, the White Eagle on the breast of the Russian, while Poland had her own civil and military orders and her own minister always sojourning beside the King (Art. 7). The Kingdom was to be a hereditary monarchy under the Tsar and following the Russian rules of succession, but he reigned in the Kingdom as a Polish King. All Alexander's successors, but not he himself, must be crowned in the capital and swear fidelity to the constitution.

A comparison of the constitution of the Kingdom with the statute of the Duchy of Warsaw shows clearly the tendency in 1815 to maintain the formal continuity of the arrangements from Napoleonic times. In essence, however, fundamental changes were effected. The *de facto* semi-absolutism of the King revived, even better fortified than in 1807. On the other hand, administrative individualism gave place to a collegiate system of the eighteenth-century type. Popular representation receded towards security for the exclusive predominance of the possessive classes and the older elements of society. Yet the representatives were assured of a greater and a truly active share in the political life of the country. The independent statehood enjoyed by the Duchy of Warsaw was replaced by a national autonomy, limited indeed in political action, but in economic completely unlimited. In every sphere, however, the possibility of further Russian influence within the Kingdom was openly established.

The statute, indeed, was curiously carried out. Whereas the Poles hoped for Tadeusz Kościuszko as commander-in-chief, Alexander appointed his brother and heir presumptive, the Grand Duke Constantine (1779-1831). Since the commander-in-chief wielded indefinite powers and depended upon Petersburg, Alexander, who knew his brother's lack of talent and education, could be sure that Constantine would find satisfaction for his ambitions in the Kingdom, if he were allowed to fancy himself supreme there. Thus the Tsar would be rid of his power in the capital.

Alexander, moreover, was assured of his brother's blind attachment to himself and sincere reverence for his person. Thus he gave the Kingdom informally into the hands of a brother to whom he assigned the highest super-constitutional position in Warsaw.

Besides Constantine, extra-constitutionally and to satisfy the ambitions of the Poles, the Tsar established Novosiltsov (1762-1838) as his Commissioner to the government of the Kingdom. The future overseer of Poland had to be at the same time a trustworthy watchman over the Grand Duke, and he knew how to make himself irreplaceable both in Warsaw and in Petersburg. Lazy, riotous, always in quest of funds, deep in debt in spite of his high pay, and dependent on his creditors, on Warsaw Jews, and on the Prussian consul, he had immense destructive energy, initiative, ability to speak the jargon of the day and to win authority for himself. With incomparable cynicism, he defended the principles of the Holy Alliance. Endowed with a splendid memory and well-read, "the Senator" from the first prepared to attack the Kingdom. He skilfully aroused the Tsar's distrust of the Poles, of Poland and of liberalism, and played upon the muddle-headedness and despotic inclinations of the Grand Duke, while with equal skill he evoked reaction among the secular and spiritual authorities of the Kingdom. To make himself all-important, he contrived to drive away all outstanding people, and to present to the Tsar such as his instinct told him were weak, reactionary or incapable of opposition.

He began with Prince Adam, reputed the future lieutenant of Poland. The skilful insinuations of Novosiltsov, however, made Alexander eager to be rid of his former minister and friend. Prince Adam received the title of senator-governor, and was called to the Administrative Council. Appearances were thus preserved, but he was completely thrust into the shade, and replaced by Prince Joseph Zająček, an old radical, a doughty warrior and Napoleonic general, but a man without character, whose head was turned by the power

which was most unexpectedly conferred upon him (29 April 1818). Contemptuous of his own people, especially of the upper classes who had suddenly become his inferiors, jealous of his power, and resenting all criticism as personal opposition, humble towards Constantine, submissive to Novosiltsov, whose ill-will towards the Czartoryskis he shared, the old Jacobin became the tool of the Tsar, and suggested to him that a struggle was inevitable with what he called the "evil spirit" pervading the Polish people.

In the beginning, at least, Alexander, in concert with Novosiltsov, summoned agents of the Duchy to fill almost all the chief posts within it, rightly believing that they, more than others, would co-operate in obliterating the memories of his political past. Above all he sought for weaklings and reactionaries.

Stanislas Potocki was Minister of the Board of Religious Denominations and Public Instruction from 1 December 1815 to 9 December 1820, but the rest were chiefly his relations or allies or members of one *coterie*. Beside the palace in Puławy near Lublin, whence the Czartoryskis, though ever more retiring, none the less exerted an immense influence over public opinion, an opposition arose in Warsaw with its focus in the salon of the Sobolewskis. In this newly created noble family until recently the "widow" of Stanislas Augustus had reigned, and now her daughter Isabella Sobolewska presided over the "Grzybów court" in Warsaw. After the departure from the Treasury of Matuszewicz, the last Puławian minister, and the replacement of Potocki by Stanislas Grabowski on the Board of Instruction, Grzybów became the unofficial centre of the government. And although at midsummer 1821, when Prince Drucki-Lubecki took the Revenue and Treasury, a second strongman joined the government, "Grzybów" continued to uphold the pretensions of the Stanislas party to rule in Poland.

For the second time, a Poniatowski, though a bastard, supplanted the Czartoryskis in influence over Poland, the more so that Grzybów gained strength by the marriage of Constantine in 1820 with the sister of the wife of young Gutakowski, a Sobolewska's son. After the death of Zajaczek, moreover, Alexander, in agreement with Constantine, named no successor, but gave the functions of a lieutenant to Valentine Sobolewski as president of the Administrative Council of the Kingdom.

Such were the constitutional and personal relationships in the new State, which quickly settled down. The church, not a little controlled by the State under the royal decree of 18 March 1817, was organized also on the basis laid down by the Concordat of 28 January 1818. A Roman Catholic diocese was established in each of the newly-

established counties, and the whole church in the Kingdom was subject to the Archbishop of Warsaw as primate. A Greek-uniate diocese of Chełm was also created.

The central administration of the country, together with the General Post, General Fire Society, Supervisory Council of Hospitals, and, from 1821, also of Roads and Bridges, fell to a Board of the Interior and of Police, which from 1816 controlled also the *gendarmérie* for the maintenance of order. County boards under their presidents dealt with corresponding matters, excepting Justice. Governing the thirty-nine districts through Commissioners, and the local colonies through bailiffs, while the towns were under burgomasters and, from 1816, under municipal councils, the subordinates of the Mostowski ministry made it the chief sphere of public life in the Kingdom. Mostowski profited by his office to undertake in the first years a series of weighty undertakings. He began to rebuild and to develop Warsaw, giving it a definitely Empire appearance, and making it a great road centre. He improved postal communications, established fairs in the capital, protected the trade of the country, imported artisans, facilitated the establishment of weaving factories in Łódź, Ozorkowa, Kalisz and elsewhere, promoted trade in Warsaw and endeavoured to raise agriculture, imported colonists, chiefly Germans, and settled them on State lands, attempted to relieve the taxes and imposts upon middle-sized and great private estates and showed interest in the farmer question.

Under the presidency of Stanislas Staszic, as director of industry and trade, the Chief Mining Directorate on the Board continued to introduce foundries, mines and factories, and to occupy itself with making them technically excellent. It attempted to increase the supply of coal and initiated the creation by the Board of Instruction of an agricultural school in 1815.

At the same time two other administrative departments were developing in different directions. Potocki took up the work of instruction, interrupted by the war, in the spirit of his labours for the Duchy of Warsaw. He procured the establishment in the capital, by a royal decree of 19 November 1816, published in January 1817, of the Alexander University. Departing from the Napoleonic type, this followed the pattern of that at Wilno. He endeavoured to maintain and to develop the teachers' seminary at Łowicz and that newly established at Puławy, and to preserve the purely secular and Polish characters of the middle and general schools. These notably developed under his administration.



The Grand Duke Constantine at once proceeded to form a new army, with the post-Napoleonic *cadres* but on the Russian system. "A good careful and honest inspector of infantry and cavalry", as Tokarz says, he kept the army and its administration in his own hands. But in his admiration of mechanization in the army he took no account of the Polish character, and, especially at first, ill-treated the staff and officers, provoking them to tragic outbursts of despair. Owing to the principle of substitution established in 1816, which freed the peasants and wealthy townsmen from service, the ranks were filled, as in Russia, from the poorest agricultural classes. The Polish army of the Kingdom, comprising the Guard, an infantry corps with its artillery, a cavalry corps with horse artillery, and the technical sections, was under Constantine. From 1817 it was associated with the Lithuanian corps, composed of two infantry divisions, a brigade of grenadiers, a brigade of artillery, and a division of Uhlans, recruited exclusively in Lithuania.

These first attempts to organize the Kingdom, added to the consequences of the war, unduly strained the energy and material resources of society. Population declined from its level in the Duchy by some 20 per cent. In the country districts poverty prevailed. Farming ceased to pay, and the debts on landed property increased. The English corn laws hampered the foreign trade of the Kingdom, as did irregular relations due to the non-settlement of accounts and the imperfect description of goods. Export to Prussia was fettered by her obstructive regulations on the Vistula, on the way to Danzig, and the Kingdom was compelled to seek other outlets and to turn towards Russia. But this cost her an increasingly adverse balance of trade, rising from 59 per cent of the exchanges in 1817 to 66 per cent in 1820. Despite certain economies, the budget grew. The burden of pensions and debts from the transitional régime did not diminish, and army expenditure increased, since no one dared to move the Grand Duke against it. The 20·7 million zlotys of 1817 became 30·7 in 1819.

Matuszewicz maintained equilibrium by increasing indirect taxation. After his departure, the deficit could not be concealed, and rose steadily to nearly 10 million in 1819.

At the same time a change in the Russian customs system and in that of the Kingdom came to pass. The convention of 19 December 1818, with Prussia, and the ukase of 15 October 1819, gave Russia free trade with Prussia, and until 1822 the Kingdom was included in the Russian customs frontier. At the same time as the Kingdom was involved in a new system, of which the consequences were catastrophic

to both states, and by which she could not profit, the unfinished negotiations about accounts were concluded by Lubecki with Prussia (22 May 1819) and with Austria (29 June 1821). The Kingdom was thus assured of 1,300,000 zł. and a supply of salt.

Lubecki's negotiations, under the personal control of the Tsar, were of undoubted advantage to the Poles and the Kingdom. Likewise in the wider sphere of politics the institutions contemplated by the constitution began their existence. Within two years, dietines and communal meetings were summoned, and, in accordance with the statute of 15 May 1816, county councils were formed. From 1818, these made a serious attempt to fulfil their functions with regard to candidates for administrative office. In the first two diets (28 March-27 April 1818, and 13 September-13 October 1820) the representation of the whole people worked normally, despite anxiety as to the impression that their activity might make upon the King. In 1818 a law proposed by the government for the delimitation of estates was adopted, as were a law regarding mortgages and a criminal code. A proposal for a marriage law to replace the Code Napoléon I, 5 and 6, however, was rejected.

In 1820 a more critical attitude towards the government was evident. Proposals for civil and criminal procedure and for organizing the Senate were rejected, while the House received ninety petitions of complaint. In face of the systematic opposition, the angry Tsar-King quitted Warsaw, but the general impression none the less remained unchanged.

Life in the Kingdom seemed normal. It appeared that the union with Russia was no menace, and that constitutional relations within the country were firmly established. In spite of economic difficulties, the landowners, under the wing of the government, regained a sense of their mission. The middle class, protected by the Ministry of the Interior, felt stronger, and began to believe in the possibility of prosperous development. They regarded Alexander as their own King, and sincerely gave him their fullest confidence. Men of every party turned to him without restraint, in the name of their own convictions. Potocki introduced the system of superintendence over the Catholic Church in support of the Orthodox King, without regard to his Russian environment. And the Polish episcopate combated the secular tendencies of its own government, appealing to the King in the closest alliance with Novosiltsov. The Opposition criticized the Polish government without touching the person of the King or thinking of the cunning eavesdropping of a Russian Commissioner. And

the ordinary citizen of the Kingdom, even the peasant or the Jew, became accustomed to live in peace without the prospect of upheaval.

Yet from 1819 the first symptoms pointed to the fact that in the Kingdom the crisis was preparing which afflicted all Europe from 1820. Within Polish society, reaction and liberalism or liberal-romanticism confronted each other. The challenge seemed to come from the camp of reaction. In 1818, the resistance of the bishops to Napoleonic institutions changed into attack. The proposed marriage law organized clerical opinion, which embraced wide social circles. The liberties secured by the constitution seemed dangerous. They were attacked first in the sphere of theory and then in that of politics. As the result of the work of Zajęczek, with temporary encouragement from Potocki, and at the prompting of Staszic, a censorship for periodicals was established which might be extended indefinitely (16 July 1819). In November, Zajęczek introduced prefects into the Warsaw lyceum, as the beginning of religious and moral supervision over all schools.

To overcome the economic difficulties, technical improvements were introduced into agriculture, such as rotation of crops, intensive culture of potatoes and fodder, stock-breeding and the first agricultural industries. But with this voluntary action by the proprietors went the regulation of farm lands, with evictions in private estates and the transformation of labour into a proletariat; in national domains, with the commutation of serf labour into payments and other burdens. Fear of waste land caused new legislation. The decree of 30 May 1818, in the name of the husbandry authority, transferred the power of the bailiffs to the proprietors, giving them in practice, though not in theory, discretionary power over the serfs, who had been removed in masses from the lands which they had always possessed and were bound to their dwelling-places. The practice of the eighteenth century was revived.

Anti-liberal action provoked a counter-attack by the liberal romantics. In 1820 an anonymous pamphlet, *Journey to Darktown*, was published by Stanislas Potocki. A mediocre work, it contained transparent allusions to well-known conditions, and bitter attacks on the clergy for their backwardness and for their claim to predominate in Polish education and culture. It inflamed both the "obscurantists" and the opposition, and became a veritable scandal, fraught with consequences.

The political opposition of 1819 was in part a movement of youth. Born on the morrow of the fall of the Republic, nourished by the

landowner and middle official, comprising the future *intelligentsia*, which lacked personal experience, it believed that it could fly alone. Among its fruits was political journalism. The *Daily Home and Foreign Gazette*, first published on 1 October 1818, and suppressed by the Lieutenant for scandal, was succeeded by the *Chronicle of the Second Half of 1819*, and this by the *White Eagle* of 1819-20. After two years of struggle, journalism failed, and the young men turned to conspiracy.

This became fashionable among them in opposition to their elders, who, broken by the Napoleonic catastrophe, self-centred, obedient to Constantine and sharing the general desire for peace, sought support in "reaction". In the middle schools and in the universities of Warsaw, Wilno, Cracow and Breslau, where many Poles were students, spontaneous societies sprang up. In 1819 the *Universal Union* arose, to be succeeded by the *Free Poles' Union* in Warsaw, which perished in the spring of 1821. The leaders adopted Masonic forms, hoping thereby to legitimize their publications. They spread the idea of progress, and, with no definite programme, dreamed of Poland great and free.

Men in the 'thirties, on the other hand, born in the days of independence, had been soldiers of Napoleon or administrators of the Duchy. Neither broken nor disillusioned, but outraged by the Vienna solution of the Polish question, and by the practice of the new Kingdom, they could still believe in Alexander himself, but not without anxiety for the future of the State and of a nation which, especially since the 1818 diet, seemed to have been shattered for ever. The soldiers formed secret societies, as, indeed they had done since 1814. Under K. Machnicki and the later leader Walery Łukasiński, they attempted to renew the society of *True Poles*, and in 1819 gave it an enduring form as the *National Freemasons*. Łukasiński, with every precaution, wished to unite the soldiers scattered through all Poland, using the ordinary forms of Masonry. When Masonry incurred repression, the union was dissolved in 1820, to reappear in the middle of 1821 as the *Patriotic Society*, or the *Society of Scythe-bearers*. This, with its central committee and its seven provinces, covered pre-Partition Poland, and was based chiefly on the army. It aimed above all at maintaining the feeling of nationality and of the connection between all sectors and the Kingdom.

Many of the well-to-do "gentry", especially in the west of the Kingdom, retained their close relations with the severed part of Great Poland which had become the Grand Duchy of Posen, and they re-

remained under its influence. They could not fail to contrast the rule of law, though within narrow bounds, which prevailed in the Prussian sector, with the lack of law within the almost independent Kingdom. Their struggle for legality gave rise to a legal opposition within its representative organs. After a petition from the Kalisz county council in 1819, the Kalisz deputies to the diet of 1820 formed a group, and, curiously enough, in the era of the *Journey to Dąbrowa* the resultant opposition attacked the author, Potocki, as the responsible minister, for his unconstitutional introduction of the censorship. The Kalisz leaders, W. and B. Niemojowski, styled "Benjaminists" after Constant, were pure doctrinaires, who defended the "admirable" statute of the Kingdom.

Innumerable signs of social unrest now began to show themselves. From 1817 at least, peasant outrages took place on the national estates, spreading next year to private properties. Refusals to work, riots, charges of oppression and actual flight marked a general feeling of hostility to the great proprietors.

The social struggle, maintained by the secret police, by their colleagues in the army, by the personal guardians of the Grand Duke, by Novosiltsov's spies, and by the secret intelligence of Schmidt, the Prussian consul in Warsaw, reached its height in 1819-20, in close connection with the prevailing economic crisis. The deficit for 1817-20 approached 31 millions. On 20 July 1819, when the first constitutional budget was preparing, Alexander demanded drastic preventive measures. The minister, Węgleński, supported by Novosiltsov, had no plan, and thereby heightened the crisis and general lack of confidence, which Schmidt aggravated with skill. To balance the budget, Węgleński collected arrears and seized deposits. At the close of 1820, he determined to stop public works, to reduce official pensions by 40 per cent, and to propose a reduction of 10,000 in the strength of the Polish army. Like Novosiltsov, he saw the only way out of the difficulty in an allowance of 2,000,000 roubles from the Russian Treasury. Russia, however, had a deficit of her own. During the year 1820, she was flooded more than ever with Western goods. Her debts did not diminish: her note circulation was appallingly large: a foreign loan did not realize expectations. Gurjev could not be counted on for assistance.

While in all spheres the crisis slowly grew, the catastrophe of the Treasury caused categorical decisions to mature. Novosiltsov took it upon himself to prepare a solution. Supported by Constantine, who could not forgive Węgleński for threatening "his" army, leagued with Schmidt, strong in the support of the bishops, who demanded

Potocki's head for the *Journey to Darktown*, he struck at the constitution and at the independence of the Kingdom. He exploited the Tsar's growing distrust of liberalism and of the Poles. He met with opposition from Prince Adam, often Alexander's mentor, who now pointed to the tyranny of Constantine and the ambiguous role of Novosiltsov, speaking of the uncertainty of opinion in the Kingdom, of financial cares, of constitution-breaking, of general suspicion and of foreign (i.e. Prussian) influences spreading chaos. Thus in fact he paved the way for the victory of Novosiltsov and the ascendancy of "Grzybów", but also for the accession of Lubecki to power.

First came the attack on Potocki. Weakened by the downfall of the liberals, he was assailed by the bishops, who, in November 1820, overwhelmed Alexander with complaints of corruption, persecution, and seditious education. Novosiltsov, by underhand methods, egged them on, and broke with Potocki, who was dismissed on 9 December. His place was taken by Stanislas Grabowski, brother of Valentine Sobolewski, a tool of Novosiltsov. A lazy man, he left business to the over-worked Szaniawski, from October 1821 Director of Education. Both men, with the Commissioner, turned to the reform of the statute of the Board of Religion and Instruction. Before their draft reached the Tsar, however, Novosiltsov aimed a second and fatal blow at Potocki, since 1812 Grand Master of Eastern Poland. In March 1821 he was deposed in favour of Novosiltsov's closest comrade, General Roźniecki, the chief of police. In May, moreover, Novosiltsov denounced Masonry to the Tsar "as the chief source and brother of all secret societies", and in June he began a great campaign against the peril from the plots of the Youth. In the Kingdom, in Cracow, in Breslau and in Berlin, he hounded on Schmidt and the Prussian government, creating a dangerous atmosphere and an impossible situation. In his great memorial to the Tsar, he had struck at the system of instruction which nurtured such evils, and therefore at the work of Potocki. And he notably succeeded in sapping Alexander's belief in its durability. By thus sowing panic, Novosiltsov undermined the Kingdom and marked himself out as the saviour.

In August 1821, the Bureau of Central Policy drew up a decree suppressing Freemasonry, which was issued on 25 September. On 14 August, the Tsar confirmed the new clericalized statute of the Board of Religion and Instruction, which gave preponderance in that body to the Russian Commissioner as mediator. Ever-widening prosecutions began, including the Patriotic Society, and enabling Novosiltsov to strike in Wilno and to break the hold of Czartoryski.

His tool was the committee for school reform in the Kingdom, a body immediately inspired by Metternich. Its report, announcing the formation of a general curatorship in the Kingdom, reached Alexander at Wilno at midsummer 1822, just when Czartoryski was striving to avert the threat from the University of Wilno. In May 1823, the first disturbances among the students gave rise to repression, while Czartoryski, as curator of Wilno, continually debated with Constantine at Warsaw. Novosiltsov gained the day. On 1 July 1823, the curatorship was established, and Novosiltsov set out for Wilno with unbounded powers. At the close of the year, the terror which pervaded certain circles in Warsaw also embraced Wilno. Prince Adam resolved to make a personal appeal to Alexander, suggesting the grant to Constantine of formal authority over both the Kingdom and Lithuania (1 November 1823). He failed to save Wilno, and was himself dismissed on 17 April 1824. Soon Novosiltsov ruled both at Wilno and in the University of Cracow, with authority in the Kingdom over both instruction and the censorship.

With political nervousness went economic uncertainty. In May 1821, the Minister of the Treasury grimly proclaimed the failure of regular payments and its ill-effects. Manufacturers, merchants and the general public complained of impotence in domestic trade, of lack of credit and of insufficiency of capital. On the side of Russia, Gurjev pressed rather for making the Kingdom dependent than for saving her. Schmidt, Novosiltsov and Constantine pressed on the Tsar different methods of dealing with the crisis, while Węgleński proved completely barren. Only Lubecki kept his head, and he best knew the state of the finances and the resources of the country. He was independent of Poland; he knew the ground at Petersburg; and he sincerely believed in Alexander and in himself. Before he could intervene, however, the Tsar declared to the government of the Kingdom, on 25 May 1821, that the question was whether the Polish Kingdom could maintain its organization from its own funds, or whether an order better proportioned to the revenue must be introduced. Alexander gave the government complete freedom to choose the necessary means. He allowed Węgleński finally to compromise himself, waited for Lubecki to conclude a Polish-Austrian agreement, and, at the end of July, named the victor Minister of the Treasury. Lubecki, still in connection with Puławy, corresponded directly with the Tsar, however greatly Novosiltsov and even Constantine might disapprove. Soon he won for himself and his department the chief position in the government of the Kingdom.

In the Kingdom, however, there was one who stood above the government. And the internal crisis coincided with an external—that in the relations between Constantine and Russia and between Russia and Poland. These two questions intersected from the first in Lithuania and Ruthenia, the western “borderlands” of Russia. From 1813 to 1815, especially in 1814, Alexander as usual issued ambiguous declarations, promising to add Lithuania to the newly incorporated lands. This was a provision of the Vienna treaty of 3 May 1815, but it had not been carried out. In 1817, however, Constantine received the command of a special Lithuanian corps, which to Polish eyes might seem a beginning of its fulfilment. In fact only a general settlement of titles and of further claims by Constantine to Lithuania were begun.

The diet of 1818 closed with a speech by Alexander on the possibilities of extending constitutionalism to the tsardom, which evoked increased reaction in Russian society. To disarm his own opponents and to fulfil his Polish-Lithuanian duties without sacrifice of power, Alexander, in October 1819, charged Novosiltsov to draft a constitution for Russia. His plan, in great part borrowed almost literally from the statute of the Kingdom, divided Russia into autonomous lieutenancies, of which Poland, even with Lithuania, merely formed one, while she lost her independent army.

When such ideas were indirectly communicated to the Russian conspirators, different changes in the tsardom and in Warsaw were ripening. Constantine sought the Tsar's permission to divorce his wife and to marry Joanna Grudzińska, with whom he was in love (1819). Alexander was willing to make this the price for his design of supplanting Constantine by Nicholas as his heir. In May 1820, the Grand Duke remarried and renounced his royal rights, on verbal promise of some compensation. He soon received *carte blanche* in practice, with regard to the statute of the Kingdom, to exercise the chief political as well as military power, with the knowledge of the lieutenant, now his subordinate. All save Constantine continued to be bound by the constitution. In the middle of 1821, Novosiltsov, followed by Prussia, attacked the separateness of the Kingdom, but the Grand Duke, warned by Czartoryski, defended the constitution.

Constantine was striving after higher rank for his wife, now Princess Łowicka, while Alexander pressed him more and more for a formal renunciation of the succession in favour of Nicholas, whom he detested and who detested him. While at Petersburg, in January 1822, Constantine received yet another assurance with regard to his role in the Kingdom, and gave a general written declaration as to abdication.



This, however, was inadequate, and the price had not been paid. Mutual bargaining continued, but the records are only fragmentary. In the spring of 1822, the Tsar proposed that Constantine should be empowered to act independently against a threatened revolution in the Kingdom. This, however, altered nothing, but it gave Constantine reason to suspect that his enemies wished to make him the executioner of Poland, while he desired to attach her to himself. He rejected the proposal, met his brothers at Wilno, and in July 1822 was proclaimed commander-in-chief in the regions of Wilno, Grodno, Mińsk, Volhynia, Podolia and Białystok. It may be safely said that "the authority and supervision of the Grand Duke in the absence of the Tsar" was thus extended to the Polish provinces within the tsardom, but that at the same time the conception of the union of Lithuania with the Kingdom was definitely ruled out.

After a Warsaw meeting with Alexander, in August 1822, Constantine received in October a diplomatic chancery of his own. All matters affecting the interior of the Kingdom were to pass through his hands. The head of the chancery was Paul Mohrenheim, Mostowski's son-in-law, and secretary to the Grand Duke, who gave an informal *exequatur* to the Prussian, Austrian and French consuls, his quasi-diplomatic corps. Thus agreement was reached at the expense of Lithuania.

During their meeting at Warsaw, Constantine gave the Tsar a new promise of abdication, and received a letter of approval. In August and September 1823, these secret documents, together with a manifesto on the transfer of the crown to Nicholas, were lodged in the Uspenski Cathedral in Moscow.

The solution of this crisis relaxed the tension. In 1823, Alexander overcame his depression and regained a lively interest in the affairs of the tsardom and of Europe. Next year, indeed, the victory on the continent of the English and Metternich renewed his apathy. Reviving in 1825, he courted the Poles as of old, raised their hopes of union with Lithuania, and, suddenly and mysteriously, vanished from history. In December, the succession crisis followed. Tragic in its misunderstandings, the Decabrist rising in Petersburg was quenched in blood. Nicholas, whom no one knew and who had still to find himself, began his reign with a pitiless sentence upon the rebels. He could never forgive either Constantine, since to him he owed the crown, or the Russian aristocracy, to which the slaughtered Decabrists belonged.

Meanwhile great economic changes took place in Europe. In 1822-3 the English market was almost closed to continental corn. Its export from the Kingdom well-nigh ceased, and Danzig declined.

Prussia sought salvation in a new tariff (10 April 1823), which specially menaced the Kingdom and caused a Polish-Prussian trade war. The negotiations between Russia, Poland and Prussia for a new tariff were difficult, but in March 1825 a convention assured protection to the industry of the Kingdom. In a moment the situation changed. The English market was reopened, and wheat imports into Liverpool rose from 10,000 quarters in 1822 to 125,000 in 1828. Shares increased in value, as did also the price of wheat in the Kingdom, especially down to 1829. A general boom period began. In fifteen years the population of the Kingdom expanded by 60 per cent. Men began to contemplate development under Russian protection. To this end, the fiscal economic system was devised, while Constantine was ever more strongly linked exclusively with the Kingdom.

In this the prime mover was the new Finance Minister, Lubecki, whom Nicholas, his steadfast patron, styled "a mannikin choked by his ambition". To Constantine he seemed the incarnation of insolence, conceit, cunning and self-assurance. In January 1829, Lubecki claimed to be the only man in Poland who worked and who knew anything. "The rest", he said, "understand nothing." His political system was his own. At first allied with Novosiltsov, he suddenly broke with him, and sought independent support in Petersburg. There he established first Ignatius Sobolewski and then Stephen Grabowski as Secretary of State and his tool with Alexander and Nicholas. Speaking excellent Russian and delighting to pose as an old Russian servant of Suvorov, he sought to pass in Petersburg for the only Russophil in Poland.

Having removed all his more distinguished collaborators from the Treasury and parted with Staszic, he surrounded himself with men who were able and industrious but obscure. The chief posts he gave to Lithuanians, making Louis Plater director-general, chief accountant and his own lieutenant. His secret ally in the government was the peaceable Mostowski. From Alexander he "extorted" an injunction to the lieutenant, Zajączek, to be always of his opinion, and failing this, to inform the Tsar, regardless of the council, of what Lubecki desired. With immense diligence, energy and ruthlessness he set to work, regardless of all restrictions, to order the finances. He appealed to the goodwill of the tax-payers, sought aid from the Russian Treasury and borrowed from bankers, from Warsaw merchants and above all from Jews.

Taxes were collected in advance and landowners ruined by military occupation. The oppressive system of direct taxes on agriculture, of which some 45 per cent. came from the farmers, was retained. Society

was demoralized by the novel supervision of trade, commerce and handicraft, which placed the bourgeoisie at the mercy of professional informers and spies of the political and ordinary police. Bribery offered the sole defence against persecution, fines and imprisonment.

Lubecki, however, introduced real economies and an ingenious budget. He freed the Treasury from the bankers, maintained the tobacco monopoly, and farmed out new monopolies of salt and liquor. While securing favourable conditions for the trade of the Kingdom with Russia, Prussia and Prussia's channel Cracow, he pursued a logical policy of protection and secured western markets for the products of the manors. He made mining profitable and gave weaving special protection. He guided commerce, protecting the larger transport firms, and organizing credit. In 1825, the Diet checked the foreclosing of mortgages, while the important Land Credit Society was established. Agriculture thus gained greater security; great properties could gradually clear themselves; and the novel debenture bonds, belying expectation, stood at 75½ per cent. in January 1827 and at over 85 in 1830. In 1826, defying Berlin, he arranged a £1,000,000 loan in London and Paris. In January 1828, by royal decree, the Bank of Poland was established, to manage the debt and to promote credit, industry and trade. In less than a year its funds reached 49,000,000 zł., and its profits 1,280,000 zł. With its support, Lubecki could borrow £1,000,000 in Berlin for 25 years at 5 per cent.

Strong through success, Lubecki claimed that he alone knew the intentions of the Tsar. After Zajączek's death, he began to act as though he were Lieutenant, domineering over the ministers and Council, and revealing his hatred of Novosiltsov. Suddenly, however, thanks to the discovery of a malicious description of the Grand Duke which he had sent to Petersburg, he found Constantine against him. In February 1829 he humbled himself with tears, but continued as of old. Supported by the Tsar, indeed, Lubecki had become too strong for a Grand Duke who was virtually a prisoner in the Belvedere, with the tottering Zajączek as his confidant. Through his wife, Constantine was connected with the ultra-Catholic camp, and he derived his inspiration from men of little weight. Declaring that for him the Tsar's will was all in all, he could only protest against the contempt shown by Lubecki towards the constitution. But he tenaciously defended the discretionary power over military and political questions which the Tsar had given him, and made no secret of his inquisitorial methods, such as the inspection of correspondence. Internal political groupings, however, he treated on the lines laid down by Alexander, who held that the Poles themselves must bear the responsibility for solving their

own difficulties, and that the limits of their loyalty towards the monarchy should not be exactly defined.

His relations with Nicholas changed Constantine not a little. He could not forgive his junior for seizing the inheritance of a brother who was still alive. He felt all the falsity of their mutual situation. The more he disliked being overshadowed by the Tsar, the stronger became the connection, if not the affection, between himself and the Kingdom, which with all formal deference to the Tsar's commands, he regarded as exclusively his own. To him, the army was his own creation, and Lithuania a temporary pledge, which every moment he feared to lose. On this head the brothers' correspondence is specially cautious and insincere in tone.

His mother's death, in November 1828, finally rooted Constantine in the Kingdom. In Warsaw, with no lieutenant after Zajączek, and with the dead-alive Vincent Sobolewski as President of the Council, he felt more and more at home. His mounting hatred of the Prussians permanently linked him with Lubecki. In negotiating the convention of 1825 he collaborated with the Finance Minister, and himself guided Mohrenheim. He feared Austrian designs on Galicia under the new governor, Prince Lobkowitz. His aim was to influence all sectors of Poland through the Kingdom, where the government fully obeyed him until the conflict with Lubecki, and where he became popular with the masses. Indeed he represented a suburb of Warsaw in the diet of 1830. As a champion of strict legality, although the ministers and Lubecki opposed, he persuaded the Tsar to follow the constitution and summon a diet, as he had persuaded him to be crowned in Warsaw. Always declaring himself heart and soul a Russian, he obviously underwent polonization. Like all Poles, he termed the work of Catherine "shameful robbery" (12 December 1827). The Kingdom alone was the fruit of victory confirmed by treaty, and therefore he wished to gain the monarch's confidence as a "good Pole". In 1829 he approached the Pulawy party, the leaders of "what the Poles in their *patois* call patriotism", and, next year, rejecting the reactionaries, he appointed Count Fredro to the Board of Instruction.

On this point he differed most from Novosiltsov, who depended upon his favour and who was the bitter foe of the Patriotic Society. Novosiltsov, however, saved himself by appealing to Petersburg, and, as Poles from the Kingdom and from Lithuania were among the Decabrists, he became indispensable. Through the year 1827-8 he combated the constitution and the separateness of the Kingdom, rousing Russian fears of the polonization of the borderlands, and identifying himself with the political and economic interests of Russia.

He was allied both with the Old Russian camp of Prince Kurakin and with the German camp of the Russian Finance Minister Kankrin, who attacked the Polish-Russian tariff and regarded Poland as a plague-spot, since her industrial development would ruin that of Russia.

Lubecki conquered the growing Russian distrust of his work, though in part this was well-founded. Under him the foreign trade of the Kingdom developed so that the chronic deficit with Austria contrasted with an excess of exports to Russia and, from 1830, to Prussia (including Cracow), which in fact comprised the transport trade through herself, for instance, to England. Polish exports to Prussia were chiefly foodstuffs, but in those to Russia, which from 1829 turned the balance against her, textiles took first place. Strzeszewski calculates that their value jumped from 140,000 zł. in 1820 to 13,740,000 in 1826, when Russia complained most bitterly—to settle at about 13,000,000 yearly. From 1826, Kankrin and the Finance Committee rose in defence against the invasion, and struck at Poland in the spheres of politics and nationality. At the same time Novosiltsov attacked Lubecki and his work, and was joined by the Grand Duke, while the Tsar was inclined to defend him.

Such was the situation in 1829, when the political crisis burst forth, and it seemed impossible to reconcile constitutional Poland with autocratic Russia. From the fragments of the shattered Patriotic Society arose a new one under Seweryn Krzyżanowski, supported by Senator Soltyk, and connected with foreign countries, especially, through General Kniaziewicz of Dresden, with France. The legend of its might strengthened its hold upon the people, and it became the focus of the struggle between Russia and those who dreamed of overthrowing autocracy. From 1824, Krzyżanowski was in touch with the conspirators of Southern Russia, but the Poles understood that they could do nothing until a Russian revolt caused the army of occupation to be withdrawn, and they showed great caution.

The Russians, on the other hand, under Pestel, demanded that Constantine's army should be immobilized in Poland and Lithuania. They vainly pressed the Poles to assassinate Constantine or the Tsar, tried to thrust them into the van, proposed to make use of their foreign connections, to command them in war and to determine their future territory and form of government. In 1825 discussions in Kiev and Volhynia led to no result.

Meanwhile, in the Diet of 1825, the official representatives of Poland showed equal caution, though all the government proposals were accepted. Without the Niemojowskis the opposition wavered, and all its petitions were rejected. The chief attack was made on the Minister

of Instruction, as representing Novosiltsov and reaction. The Senate cautiously criticized the government as a whole, demanding a constitutional judicature and a legal censorship—and that with greater weight because its journals were printed.

In December 1825 and January 1826, under Nicholas, a new era began. The Patriotic Society was again destroyed, and Poles from a constitutional country were arrested for plotting a Russian constitution. Russia then attacked the constitution of a dangerous economic rival. In 1827, Nicholas committed the trial to a supreme court of the diet under Bieliński. After the death of Alexander, Prince Adam had assumed the leadership of opinion and secretly advised the newly appointed court, which set to work with a deep sense of responsibility but with due reverence for the constitution. It refused to be bound by the findings of a previous committee of investigation, allowed the accused to be defended, and ended its long and severe labours with an acquittal, which Vincent Krasiński alone opposed (22 May 1828). This, Constantine declared, was an impeachment of the government, and on 6 June he suspended the verdict. War in the Balkans, however, saved the Senate from attack by him or by the Tsar, though Nicholas judged the verdict shameful, ungrateful, insulting, and an encroachment on his own prerogative regarding Lithuania. Proud of their Senate, the Poles showed their delight at the news of "similar" Russian defeats in the Balkan War.

On 29 August 1828, Nicholas instructed the Administrative Council to discover whether the verdict was due to incompetence or treason. The discussion, which went on from 9 September to 20 December, became a duel between Novosiltsov and Lubecki, who defended the Senate and gained the day. Schmidt rejoiced that the estrangement between Poles and Russians was greater than in 1813. It was rumoured that Krasiński would gain Lubecki's place. The Tsar, however, decided that the verdict should be confirmed and the Senate censured, and this, prompted by Krasiński, the Grand Duke carried out (March 1829). Lubecki, who remained, rose in public opinion and in his own. While the royal brothers discussed the first steps for a new constitutional King to take in Poland, the verdict and the worsening economic relations with Russia were affecting Polish society. Unemployment began to show itself, and, especially in Warsaw, the continued high cost of living was a source of industrial unrest, as yet unorganized. As Constantine said, the young men were convinced that, since the Tsar and he had been beaten, the patriots would soon be out of gaol. Such views prevailed among students, soldiers both in service and in the Cadet School, and Warsaw workmen. On the

basis of the loose, isolated conspiracies that existed a comprehensive structure began to rise. Lelewel, an ex-professor of Wilno, whom the government persecuted, gained the greater fame, but Niemcewicz and even Prince Adam were in contact with the movement. Those who could, fled abroad. L. Chodźko and T. Morawski linked the nascent conspiracy with France. From about the middle of 1828 a union in the Cadet School took the lead.

In mid-May 1829, Nicholas was crowned in Warsaw cathedral. He charmed society, courted the masses, and thrust his brother and Prince Adam into the shade. From Warsaw, where anti-Russian feeling had almost found vent in an attempt upon his life, he went, with unconscious symbolism, to Berlin. Meanwhile the ferment grew, and although the lack of leadership and their disappointment with their elders restrained the young from action, the legend of a great coronation plot, which Slowacki immortalized, came into being. There remained a bitter sense of ineffectiveness which paralysed the will.

The year 1830 began in calm, but an expectant mass of elements prepared for action. Members of the old Society of Free Poles, remnants of the Patriotic Society, leaguers from the Cadet School, young poets from the Ukraine, Moraczewski from Poznań, young men and journalists, with threads reaching on the one hand to Lelewel and on the other to the Old Town in Warsaw—all looked to 28 May and to the Diet which was then to meet. This, during its month of session, gave signs of independence which belied its submissive appearance. It rejected two proposals, one for a marriage law recommended by the Tsar and the clerics at his back. In committees the action of the government was tested by the constitution and a petition reminded it that pardon had not been granted to Łukasieński.

In the Senate, however, Prince Adam and a committee sketched a full national programme in their criticisms of government action, claiming that the senators must watch over the full accomplishment of political rights. Themselves great proprietors, they urged that agricultural reforms should be undertaken on national estates and officially recommended to private landowners. Defending religion against clericalism, they demanded that public instruction and national culture should be saved from Novosiltsov, acting through Grabowski. Thus two men and two systems were ranged for mortal combat: Czartoryski and Poland, aiming at modern reform, against Nicholas and Russian autocracy.

Only a blow from without was needed to reveal the sharp but forcibly concealed antagonism which underlay the superficial calm of 1830.

## B. THE NOVEMBER INSURRECTION

REVOLUTION broke out in Warsaw in the evening of 29 November, 1830. It was caused mainly by the school of infantry cadets, founded and particularly cared for by the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish army, the Grand Duke Constantine. One of the instructors, Piotr Wysocki, a second lieutenant of the Grenadier Guards, had founded, in December 1828, a secret association among the officers and pupils of the school. As to the aims and methods of the association, two tendencies became apparent at the very outset. The radicals planned complete independence, by means of armed action, to be started in the spring. The moderates, supported by Wysocki, limited their immediate plans to the defence of the frequently violated constitution, leaving direct action for a later period, when the association would be extended by including higher officers and civil notables, particularly members of the Sejm (Diet) and former members of the Patriotic Society. Owing to the influence of Wysocki, the latter tendency triumphed. The radical section, however, opposed on several occasions the founder of the association, on account of his undecided policy. The school had twice planned action: during the coronation of Nicholas I as King of Poland, in May 1829, and on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to Warsaw the year after, during the parliamentary session. The signal for the revolution was to be given by the kidnapping of the Tsar and his family. Wysocki's abandonment of both these plans at the last moment, under the pressure of civilian political circles, caused indignation and resentment among the more fiery conspirators. His timid policy was probably responsible for the slow growth of the association in its early period.

It was only in September 1830 that it became more animated, for several reasons. The July revolution in Paris caused general excitement throughout the country. Then the conspirators learned with horror that the Polish army was to leave soon for France as the vanguard of the Russian forces, in order to repress the revolution. Stirred by these reports, the secret association of the cadets' school became active among the officers, the civilians and particularly the undergraduates of Warsaw University. The number of the members increased and a prominent position among them was taken by a second lieutenant of the 1st Infantry of the Line, Joseph Zaliwski, a man of radical views, who recognized the association and worked relentlessly for an early



revolution. Wysocki contrived to postpone the date of the outbreak, which had twice before been fixed for October. This caused such friction within the association that a secession was threatened. Further delay, moreover, endangered the conspirators, as the police were already on its track; there had been arrests and the association might be stamped out if it did not soon start its work. Therefore the committee directing the association fixed 10 December as the latest date of the outbreak. In the meantime it was learned that Nicholas had ordered the Grand Duke Constantine, who minimized the importance of the movement, to start an energetic investigation and court-martial the culprits. With no time to lose, the Committee at its session of 27 November decided irrevocably to start the revolution on the evening of the 29th, at 6 p.m.

A revolution in Warsaw had chances of success, as even exclusive of the population which might support it, the Polish garrison numbered 10,000 men, while the Russians were only 6500 strong. The execution of the hastily made plan however, failed at several points. The fire in the suburb of Solec, which was to be the signal for the revolution, broke out too early and was so small that it passed almost unnoticed. The attack on the Belvedere palace, carried out mostly by students, failed because Constantine was hidden away by his servants. The attack of the cadets, under Wysocki, on the near-by barracks of the Russian cavalry, also failed. Wysocki had to retreat into the city. Many mistakes were made—some detachments, such as the Guard regiment of mounted rifles, unaware of the plans of the secret association, passed to the side of the Grand Duke.

In spite of the difficulties and of the opposition of the superior officers, the plotters managed to get most of the soldiers out of the barracks and assembled them at the arsenal, where arms were distributed to civilian volunteers, mostly tradesmen and small townfolk. But although a part of the town had been seized, the situation of the revolutionaries at 10 p.m. was bad. The Grand Duke Constantine assembled more and more troops, the Russians were not disarmed and the Polish forces were divided.

The insurgents lacked a leader, for neither Wysocki nor Zaliwski felt able to take command. The cadets, marching into the city, asked two generals, Potocki and Trębicki, whom they met on the way, to take command. Their refusal cost them their lives. General Chłopicki, whom the insurgents found in the theatre, also refused and vanished, so as not to be mixed up with the movement. Without a commander, the development of the revolution appeared very un-

certain. But the other side, and particularly the Grand Duke, was overwhelmed by the events, and although they could have easily nipped the revolution in the bud, they did nothing. The Grand Duke said that he did not wish to interfere in purely Polish matters. The insurgents, emboldened by his inaction, took after midnight, with the help of the armed populace, the whole northern part of the city.

That success did not, however, help the cause of the insurrection greatly, as its leaders did not know what exactly to do next, having no detailed plans or great experience. A new element, however, then entered on the scene—the Administrative Council, or Government of the Kingdom of Poland.

The minister of finance, Prince Ksawery Lubecki, realizing that the insurgents had formed no government by midnight, assembled on his own initiative some members of the Council and other prominent personalities. They decided to send a delegation to the Grand Duke, but when he stated again that he did not wish to intervene in any way, they decided to take matters into their own hands. As a result, the Administrative Council, still acting on behalf of Tsar Nicholas, issued in the morning of 30 November two proclamations: one condemning the events of the previous night, and the second announcing that Prince Adam Czartoryski, Prince Radziwiłł, Kochanowski, General Pac, Niemcewicz and General Chłopicki had been co-opted as members of the Council.

That step had important consequences, taking the direction of the movement out of the hands of its initiators and giving it a completely new character. The Council had no intention of making an armed struggle against Russia. On the contrary, it desired to appease, as soon as possible, the revolutionary effervescence and then begin negotiations with Nicholas, in order to obtain some concessions for the Kingdom.

The Council put forward General Chłopicki, a well-known soldier, in the hope of obtaining wider popularity for its policy. He was appointed commander of the whole Polish army on 3 December. A Civil Constabulary was organized in the towns and villages for the purpose of keeping public order. Simultaneously, negotiations had been opened with the Grand Duke Constantine. To the conference of delegates which met at Wierzbno on 2 December the Grand Duke promised that he would not attack Warsaw without an order to do so and, in that case, he would give the Polish authorities forty-eight hours' notice. He also promised to intercede with the Emperor to let bygones be bygones; finally he stated that he would not order the

Lithuanian corps to enter the Kingdom of Poland. The Polish delegation declared that the nation desired the incorporation in the Kingdom of the "occupied provinces" (i.e. the eastern borderlands), according to the promise of Alexander.

In its further activities the Council met with unexpected opposition from the revolutionary elements. As early as 1 December they had formed a club known as the Patriotic Society, which began a strenuous agitation in the capital. Next day, it sent a delegation to the Administrative Council, expressing distrust of it, and then demanded immediate hostilities against Russia, as well as the conduct of negotiations with the Empire not through the Grand Duke, but directly with Nicholas.

The Council, taken by surprise, proposed to incorporate some representatives of the Society. Since the composition of the Council was changed and that institution, as acting on behalf of Nicholas, was not too popular, its name was changed on 3 December to "Temporary Government of the Kingdom of Poland".

The activity of the Patriotic Society caused the revolutionary elements again to take the upper hand. The retreat of the Grand Duke Constantine on 3 December in the direction of Russia, allowing his Polish regiments to return to Warsaw, contributed to that attitude. The arrival of new Polish regiments from the provinces reassured public opinion as to the possibility of victory. The behaviour of Chłopicki was the obstacle.

The general, enjoying a considerable reputation as one of the best officers of the legions of Dąbrowski and the Napoleonic campaign in Spain, had retired completely from public life since he was pensioned in 1818 after a violent conflict with the Grand Duke. Appointed Commander-in-Chief by the Temporary Government on 3 December, he proclaimed himself dictator two days later, pending the convocation of the Sejm. He was opposed to all revolutionary movements and, knowing the power of Russia, he did not believe in a military victory of Poland. Following the line laid down by Lubecki, he assumed dictatorial powers to restore order in the country and obtain concessions from Nicholas by negotiation.

These would have to be mainly the strict observance of the Constitution, its extension to the occupied provinces, the non-introduction of Russian troops into the Kingdom and complete amnesty for the participants in the revolution. With that design, he brought to Warsaw some regiments from the provinces to keep order, allowed the undisturbed retreat of the Russian army under the Grand Duke, and prevented war preparations in the country. Finally on 10 December

he sent to St Petersburg the minister Lubecki and the deputy Jan Jezierski to negotiate with Nicholas.

But the hopes of Lubecki and Chłopicki of settling the conflict peacefully were soon dispelled. The Emperor, infuriated by the revolution, issued on 17 December a manifesto severely condemning the November events, and ordering the Administrative Council to take over its duties in its original composition. The military commanders were to assemble their regular troops at Plock and to disband all the irregular formations. In conclusion he excluded any possibility of negotiations.

The Sejm assembled on 18 December, before the manifesto had had time to reach Warsaw. Chłopicki, true to his promise, placed his dictatorial powers at its disposal. The Houses, however, reinvested him with these powers on 20 December, forming a commission of control composed of the Marshals and of some members of both Houses, with the right to transfer the dictatorship to another person if they thought it necessary. It was also decided at the same session to issue a proclamation declaring the insurrection national and announcing that the Poles would not lay down their arms until they had won back their independence and the provinces taken by Russia. That act was of capital importance, as the representatives of the nation had given reasons in it for the outbreak of the revolution and had reverted to the conception of its initiators—so frequently distorted—of an armed struggle against Russia.

The dictator agreed with reluctance, under the pressure of the rising tide of patriotic feeling, to begin active armament, at least of a partial sort. Only when, towards the end of December, more certain news about the armaments of Russia began to arrive, did he decide to organize volunteer battalions and to increase the regular army to 100,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry. When Chłopicki received from Nicholas, on 7 January 1831, the order of unconditional surrender, he realized the failure of his original policy and convoked the Sejm, to lay down at its very first meeting his dictatorial powers irrevocably. His policy had done considerable harm to the insurrection, because he had wasted much of the nation's enthusiasm and the best time for the carrying out of military preparations and strategical moves.

After his resignation, the Sejm appointed Commander-in-Chief, on 20 January, Prince Michał Radziwiłł, a general from the period of the Duchy of Warsaw, who had long ago left the army. There was one point in his favour—Chłopicki had promised to assist him with advice. At the session of 25 January, the Houses voted the dethrone-

ment of Nicholas—thus breaking off every possibility of negotiations with St Petersburg, while on 30 January the Parliament entrusted supreme authority to a National Government of five persons presided over by Prince Adam Czartoryski.

War was now becoming inevitable. The military authorities did their utmost to make good the neglect of the Chłopicki dictatorship. The result was such that in the first phase of the war it was possible to send to the field 47 battalions of infantry, 97 squadrons of cavalry and 15 batteries of artillery, that is a total of 53,000 men.

Nicholas, as soon as he learned of the outbreak on 7 December, ordered Field-Marshal Dybicz to form an army and crush the insurrection. It was composed of the 1st, 3rd, and 6th Grenadier corps, the 5th Reserve corps and, later, the Guards corps with the 2nd Infantry corps. At the beginning of the campaign Dybicz had 106 battalions, 156 squadrons, 35 hundreds of Cossacks and 348 guns—that is about 127,000 men. He believed that with such superiority he could easily beat the small Polish army. He reckoned the duration of the campaign as one month and hastened to assemble the troops, caring little about their provisions and ammunition. In fact the whole army was soon ready. It reached the frontier of the Kingdom of Poland in the beginning of February, and crossed it on 5 and 6 February. Dybicz decided to act on a wide front, of over 500 kilometres in a straight line, and divided his army into eleven columns. He wished to direct the main forces into the triangle between the rivers Bug and Narew and smash the Polish forces there while they defended the crossing of those rivers, or to engage them frontally and take Warsaw by passing the Vistula suddenly from the flank.

The snows began to thaw as early as 8 February, causing the rivers to rise and making many roads impassable. That forced Dybicz to change his plans. He was compelled to transfer his theatre of operations to the Brześć road. He managed with difficulty to get his centre over the river Bug at Nur, and on 13 and 14 February over the Liwiec, and he occupied the districts of Liw, Węgrów and Siedlce, where he stopped for three days in order to rest his troops, which were exhausted by their long march.

The Polish army, however, was taken by surprise and had not finished its preparations. It had no definite strategical plan or exact knowledge of the chief Russian line of advance. Hence the favourable opportunity was lost.

Several skirmishes between the advance guards had taken place and a fine victory was even won by General Dwernicki on 14 February at

Stoczek, where he defeated the enemy's left wing division of cavalry under General Geismar. The Polish headquarters, however, had insufficient information about the movements of the enemy and could not, therefore, prevent him in time from the difficult crossing of the swollen waters of the Bug and Liwiec.

After giving a rest to his troops, Dybicz marched straight on Warsaw. In his march he encountered two Polish divisions on 17 February: that of General Zymirski at Kałuszyn and of General Skrzynecki at Dobrze. Two simultaneous battles were engaged, in which the Poles, in particular Zymirski, offered strong resistance; but they were finally compelled by the much superior forces of the enemy to retreat towards Warsaw.

In view of the approach of the Russian troops, the Polish command decided to concentrate near the capital all its divisions on the Grochów plain, in order to offer decisive resistance there. On 19 February there were some new encounters. The advance guard of the 6th corps of General Rosen attacked at Wawer the divisions of Zymirski and Szembek retreating from Kałuszyn. The Poles fought off the attack, but when large reinforcements came to the assistance of the enemy, they retreated to Grochów.

On the next day the first fights at Grochów began. The alder wood held by the division of Skrzynecki was the key position of the battle. It resisted the repeated attacks of the 6th corps, so that in the afternoon General Rosen ceased his offensive.

Dybicz, faced by such strong resistance, decided to attack the Polish positions from two sides: by a frontal attack of his main forces he wanted to engage the Polish divisions at Grochów, while simultaneously attacking the Polish left wing with the Grenadier corps of Shakhovskoy. As that corps was expected to arrive in a few days' time, Dybicz suspended operations until 26 February, hoping to execute his plan on that day.

Contrary to expectations, the battle began earlier. Shakhovskoy encountered, quite unexpectedly, strong resistance on the part of the brigade of Małachowski at Białoleka, during his march from Zgierz, on 24 February. The Russian corps therefore began a rapid retreat towards its main forces, followed by the Poles. Shakhovskoy's corps suffered serious losses and Dybicz, in order to save it, abandoned his plan and began an immediate offensive on the Polish positions of Grochów.

Severe fighting began, and the Poles, though they resisted for a long time, were eventually forced to retreat before the repeated

attacks of a more numerous enemy. The commander, General Chłopicki, was wounded and the artillery ran short of ammunition. The Polish forces then occupied the bridgehead at Praga in a strong defensive position.

The battle at Grochów was undecided, for in spite of the appearance of a Polish defeat, the Russian troops were not victorious. Dybicz had not destroyed the Polish forces and had not taken Warsaw. He had suffered heavy losses, about 10,000 men. The Poles had also sustained heavy losses, about 7,000, but they had at least the satisfaction of having broken the first impetus of the enemy.

The battle caused panic in the capital. Most of the members of both Houses wished to leave as soon as possible. Negotiations with Dybicz were suggested, while on the same night Radziwiłł resigned his post of Commander-in-Chief. The feelings of alarm were, however, mastered. On the following day, 26 February, General Skrzynecki, who showed most coolness and skill in the recent battles, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. The suspension of further operations by Dybicz gave the population time to calm itself. In view of the losses sustained and in order to rest his forces, Dybicz withdrew most of them from the neighbourhood of Warsaw and dispersed them in winter camps.

General Skrzynecki took advantage of that interval to reorganize and complete his army. He managed to improve not only its morale, but also its numbers, so that by the end of March he had over 60,000 regular troops.

The Polish staff considered the idea of an offensive. The two most capable officers, the quartermaster-general, Colonel Prądzyński, and the chief of the general staff, Colonel Chrzanowski, proposed various plans. But Skrzynecki postponed a decision, hesitating to attack the main Russian forces.

Dybicz wanted also to postpone operations, as his army had been considerably weakened by hunger and disease, being reduced to 67,000 men. He waited for reinforcements, viz. the Guards corps and the 2nd Army corps. His position became more difficult when towards the end of March an insurrection broke out in Lithuania, menacing his rear. Finally, under the pressure of Nicholas, he decided to cross the Vistula on the night between 4 and 5 April at Tyszyn and attack Warsaw from the south.

The news of the preparations of Dybicz for crossing the Vistula accelerated the action of the Polish general staff. It was then that Prądzyński proposed the bold plan of attacking the 6th corps of

General Rosen, stationed near the suburb of Praga, and after destroying it, of attacking the main Russian forces on the bank of the Vistula. Skrzynecki, who was undecided up to that moment, finally accepted the plan, which he modified only concerning the action against the 6th corps.

The preparations for that expedition were made in the greatest secrecy. On the night of 30-31 March, troops passed to the right bank of the Vistula over a bridge covered with straw and at dawn attacked the advance guard of the 6th corps, commanded by General Geismar, forcing it back and inflicting serious losses on the Russians. They then followed them to Dęby Wielkie, where they attacked the main body of the 6th corps. After some hours' fighting, the Polish forces broke the Russian positions and the 6th corps was dispersed. The result was satisfactory, for the enemy lost about 13,000 men and all his stores.

The Polish commander now had a good chance of attacking Dybicz, according to the plan of Prądyński, as now the forces on both sides were almost equal, or he could at least take the town of Siedlce, an important centre of communication for the Russians. But Skrzynecki, satisfied with the first stage of action, failed to continue it or even to order the pursuit of the remains of the 6th corps. It took a week of strong persuasion by the President of the National Government, Prince Adam Czartoryski, to obtain his agreement to the sending of the force of Colonel Prądyński to take Siedlce.

But that expedition came too late. Dybicz, informed about the defeat of the 6th corps, abandoned the idea of crossing the Vistula and began to retreat in the direction of Siedlce, ordering General Rosen to secure and defend that point in advance. Prądyński encountered the enemy before reaching Siedlce, at Iganie, 10 April, where he defeated the Russians and forced them to retreat. That victory was not taken full advantage of, as Skrzynecki ordered retreat when he was informed about the approach of the enemy's main force. He took up a position between the rivers Świder, Kostrzyn and Liwiec. Thus the best opportunities for defeating the Russians were wasted by the Commander-in-Chief.

During that period the Government was busy mainly with two problems. In March it placed before Parliament a plan for the endowment of peasants with land on national estates. The Houses, debating at that time in the so-called "smaller quorum", accepted this plan with sympathy, but when in the middle of April the matter was brought before a plenary meeting, it was completely abandoned.



Apart from that, the Government also engaged in wider diplomatic activities, directed by the President of the Government, Prince Adam Czartoryski, who knew perfectly the technique and importance of diplomacy, since he had been minister of foreign affairs of the Emperor Alexander. Already at the time of Chłopicki's dictatorship, Poland had attempted to establish relations not only with neighbouring countries, but also with France and Great Britain. These attempts, however, were unsuccessful, as it was generally believed that Russia would soon suppress the insurrection. Besides, Prussia and Austria had immediately taken up a hostile attitude. The National Government expected, however, that after the breaking of the enemy's first attack at Grochów and particularly after the last victories of Wawer, Dęby Wielkie and Iganie, the foreign governments might change their attitude towards the Polish question and offer assistance. The attitude of some powers did actually change, and conversations were opened with the Polish delegates, but nobody offered assistance. Austria attached too much importance to her relations with Russia to engage herself, particularly as she had revolutionary troubles in her Italian provinces. The French Government, on the help of which the Poles counted most, was unfriendly to the insurrection, as it also desired good relations with the Czar of Russia. French public opinion, and particularly the liberal circles, expressed their sympathy with the cause of Poland, but their assistance was limited to moral support and the sending of a small group of volunteers. Great Britain held out some hopes, but the Whig government, busy with its struggles for a new electoral law, failed to pay much attention to Polish problems, even though its general attitude towards Poland was not unfriendly.

In the meantime a period of quiet came on the main scenes of events. The inactivity of Skrzynecki and his reluctance to accept a general battle with Dybicz brought unfavourable results even on more distant sections of the front. In the middle of April General Sierakowski, charged with guarding the upper course of the Vistula, suffered a defeat at Wronów and Kazimierz. The corps of Dwernicki was also defeated. General Dwernicki, who had distinguished himself in the beginning of the war in the battle of Stoczek, moved at the beginning of March into Volhynia, in order to promote a national rising in southern Poland. On 19 April he fought a fine cavalry battle at Boreml but later, being insufficiently assisted by the local insurgents, he was compelled by superior Russian forces to cross, on 27 April, the Austrian frontier with his 4000 men, who were disarmed and interned. That tragic end to a fine corps was a heavy loss for the Poles. The

endeavours of the National Government to obtain its release from Austria failed, as well as the representations of Great Britain in Vienna in the same matter.

Skrzynecki sent to the rescue of Dwernicki, on 3 May, a corps of 6000 men under General Chrzanowski, but he did it too late. Chrzanowski, after encounters with Kreutz at Firlej and Lubartów, reached Zamość, and having learned about the disaster of Dwernicki, he remained there for some time. Thus Skrzynecki not only failed to help Dwernicki, but he also deprived himself unnecessarily of the forces sent to a considerable distance from Warsaw under Chrzanowski.

The lack of initiative of the Commander-in-Chief began to affect adversely the morale of the troops, so that finally, under the pressure of the Government and of Parliament, Skrzynecki consented to execute the plan of Prądyński and attacked the Guards. The Guards corps, composed of the finest youth of Russia, had not so far participated actively in the campaign and was stationed between Łomża and Ostrołęka, with a strength of 25,000 men. On 14 May Skrzynecki concentrated in Sierock 44,000 men and 108 guns and then advanced in three columns towards Łomża and Ostrołęka. These moves were to be made rapidly and secretly, so as to surprise the Guards and destroy them before Dybicz could come to the rescue with the main forces. But owing to Skrzynecki's slowness in attacking, the Guards managed to retreat behind the river Narew and the belated pursuit was fruitless. The Commander-in-Chief had wasted another opportunity of victory by his undecided policy and had exposed his army to defeat. Dybicz came to the rescue of the Guards and attacked the Poles on 26 May at Ostrołęka. After fierce fighting, the Poles were forced to retreat to the right bank of the Narew, from which they opposed a very strong resistance to the enemy. Skrzynecki led the Polish brigades personally to attack under heavy fire and behaved with great courage, but he also proved in that battle that he had no qualifications for a commander-in-chief. Finally, about 8 p.m., he ordered a general retreat towards Warsaw, which was effected without any great opposition from the enemy, who was exhausted by his heavy losses.

The result of the expedition against the Guards produced a feeling of depression in the whole country. The physical losses were not very considerable, for the army had at the beginning of June over 80,000 men and 117 guns, but the moral damage was irreparable. The foreign powers, which had begun to take up a sympathetic attitude as a result of previous Polish successes, relapsed into passive expectancy.

Many Poles desired to end the war, which did not promise favourable results. The Government and Parliament had lost confidence in the Commander-in-Chief.

Skrzynecki realized what the public feeling was and decided to rehabilitate himself by a new victory, for which the general disposition of the enemy forces afforded a fairly good opportunity. In the beginning of June the main Russian forces were stationed near Pułtusk. Dybicz intended to cross to the left bank of the Vistula and attack Warsaw from the south immediately after the arrival of expected reinforcements. In the course of the preparations he died, 10 June, producing thereby a certain confusion in the Russian General Staff. Skrzynecki finally decided to undertake two expeditions: against the corps of Kreutz and of Rüdiger. Both failed. Kreutz managed to retreat in time and avoided an encounter. When Rüdiger was surrounded at Łysobyki on 19 June, General Jankowski, commanding the Polish expedition, received at the crucial moment an order of the General Staff to return to Warsaw. He complied with that order too hastily, without having accomplished his principal and immediate task.

The failure of the two expeditions, and particularly the shocking result of the operation against Rüdiger, completely destroyed public confidence in the Commander-in-Chief. In order to divert attention from himself, Skrzynecki had the two generals guilty of the failure against Rüdiger arrested. They were Generals Jankowski and Bukowski, and some other officers and civilians were also arrested at the same time. These arrests caused disturbances in Warsaw on 29 June, which were, however, soon suppressed by the National Government.

Skrzynecki remained inactive, although the enemy had now taken the initiative. The new Russian commander, Paskevich, wishing to end the war as soon as possible, decided to cross the Vistula to the left bank near Płock and attack Warsaw from the north, not, like Dybicz, from the south. The march from Pułtusk to the lower Vistula, started on 4 July, was attended by considerable risk for the Russians if the Poles attacked their flank from the south. But Skrzynecki did not profit by that opportunity. Instead of attacking, with all his forces, the Russian columns struggling with local difficulties in their march, and destroying them one by one, he only sent to Modlin a weak corps of 10,000 men to watch the movements of the enemy. When he finally decided on action, it was too late. Paskevich had reached the Vistula and crossed it, with considerable Prussian assistance, at Osiek, without serious opposition from the Poles.

The fact that Skrzynecki permitted this crossing of the Vistula, as well as the unsuccessful skirmishes near Warsaw with the agile corps of Golovin, caused a new wave of indignation against the Commander-in-Chief, increased by news which arrived from Lithuania. The Staff sent a small detachment of 1000 picked men in May to help the insurrection in Lithuania, which was developing very well and was of capital importance for the general situation. In particular, military instructors were to be provided for the groups of insurgents which were being formed there. After the battle of Ostrołęka a whole corps, 12,000 men under General Giełgud, was directed to Lithuania. He took over the general command in that region, but he exercised it without skill. Finally, pursued by superior Russian forces, he retreated into Prussian territory, depriving the Polish command of 8000 well-trained soldiers. He also ruined the chances of the Lithuanian insurrection, which had rendered good service through keeping important Russian forces busy. Only General Henryk Dembiński with 4000 men managed to get to Warsaw, in spite of pursuit and numerous difficulties. His arrival on 3 August was acclaimed by the enthusiastic public.

Although the general situation was growing worse, Skrzynecki was not eager to start operations, and it was Parliament that forced him to march on 1 August to Sochaczew, with the intention of stopping the enemy on the line of the river Bzura. He then remained there inactive, although Paskievich in the meantime had established communication with the corps of Rüdiger, which had crossed to the left bank of the Vistula at Józefów and was ravaging the southern provinces.

The inactivity of the Commander-in-Chief at a moment when the maximum of energy was required called forth a strong reaction. Parliament decided on 9 August to send a delegation to General Headquarters, situated at Bolimów, in order to investigate the situation on the front. The delegation, after consulting a number of generals and leading officers, deprived Skrzynecki of the command and entrusted it temporarily to General Dembiński, who had just distinguished himself in Lithuania. But he also did not fulfil the hopes placed in him. Following the advice of Skrzynecki, he gave on 14 August the disastrous order to leave the line of the Bzura and withdraw to Warsaw.

That voluntary retreat caused new disturbances in Warsaw. On 15 August, at night, the crowd attacked the insufficiently guarded castle and murdered Generals Jankowski and Bukowski, kept there under arrest, as well as some persons suspected of treason. Then

other prisoners were attacked and persons suspected of espionage were summarily hanged by the populace. The rioting would have continued, but General Krukowiecki, appointed governor of the capital, subdued it by means of severity.

The riots, however, had serious consequences. On 16 August the National Government resigned. Next day, Parliament undertook to change the form of government. As the previous government, composed of five persons, was not sufficiently efficient, Parliament decided to entrust the supreme power to one man only—"the President of the Council of Ministers", who had the right of appointing not only the other six ministers, but also the Commander-in-Chief. General Krukowiecki, who had just suppressed the riots, was elected President by a large majority. He was energetic, but hot-tempered and too ambitious, so that he readily entered into personal conflicts with his collaborators.

On taking over the government the new President, desiring to control the military operations himself, appointed only an Assistant Commander-in-Chief, General Kazimierz Małachowski, a distinguished veteran of the Kościuszko and Napoleonic wars, but too old and lacking in the necessary energy and vigour.

On 19 August, Krukowiecki convoked a War Council to decide on further steps. It was decided to leave the main forces in the fortifications of Warsaw and send out two groups: one to the province of Płock, to bring food supplies for Warsaw, and the other to Podlasia, to destroy the corps of Rosen. The first expedition accomplished its task well, but the second was a failure. It was commanded by General Ramorino, of foreign origin, who marched on 23 August towards Mińsk Mazowiecki with more than 20,000 picked men and 42 guns against the corps of Rosen, barely 11,000 strong. Nevertheless he allowed the enemy to retreat to Brześć and, pursuing him, allowed his group to be drawn too far away from Warsaw. Ramorino then failed to return to Warsaw when he was ordered to do so and his insubordination deprived the capital of 20,000 defenders.

In the meantime Paskewich approached Warsaw on 18 August, but postponed action, expecting reinforcements. When they arrived, his army was brought up to 80,000 men. He wished to obtain the capitulation of Warsaw by negotiations, which were opened on 4 September, but he met with a definite refusal of the Poles to surrender. Then, on 6 September, he ordered a general attack on the fortifications of Warsaw.

The fortifications were composed of three lines of defences. The

inner line was composed of the old and practically useless customs walls. The two outer lines, built in the course of the campaign, were made of earthworks, some of which were unfinished. The western front, with the fort of Wola for its central point, was the best fortified. These fortifications were too widely spread, and there were only 28,000 regular troops and 10,000 poorly armed recruits to man them. As there were not enough men and guns, some forts had to be left undefended.

At dawn on 6 September, the Russian forces attacked the western front. The Poles did not expect an attack on that side and were unprepared, so that the Russians soon took most of the forts of the first line. Wola, defended by the heroic one-legged General Sowiński, stood the attack longest. But when he fell about noon and the garrison, decimated by the Russian artillery, received no reinforcement, Wola was also taken. The Polish artillery stopped the assault on the second line. Paskevich suspended operations in the afternoon, in view of his heavy losses.

Krukowiecki, depressed by the results of the battle, opened negotiations and obtained from Paskiewich a truce until 1 p.m. of the following day. But the Government, and in particular the Parliament, resisted unconditional capitulation. The term of the truce lapsed during the negotiations. At 1.30 p.m. on 7 September Paskevich opened a new attack. After artillery preparation, the Russian army attacked the second line of defence, between the Jerozolimska and Wolska toll-houses. They took these fortifications with considerable difficulty, and by the evening they had reached the outskirts of the town. Afraid of being surrounded, General Małachowski at 10 p.m. ordered a retreat to the right bank of the Vistula, to the suburb of Praga. New negotiations resulted in a declaration of General Małachowski, addressed to Paskevich at midnight to the effect that the Polish army, in compliance with the Russian demands, was abandoning Warsaw and marching towards Płock.

The evacuation of Warsaw and the march of the Polish army northward took place in an atmosphere of depression and discouragement. The troops assembled in the fortress of Modlin, where morale was soon restored. The situation was not yet entirely hopeless. The capital was lost, but the main Polish forces still numbered 33,000 men, while there were also other corps, such as that of Ramorino with 20,000 men, of Różycki in the province of Kielce, with 10,000 men, and the garrisons of the fortresses of Modlin and Zamość, totalling 9000 men—altogether over 70,000 soldiers.

It was therefore decided in Modlin not to recognize the capitulation of Warsaw, and to continue the struggle. Important personal changes also took place. General Małachowski resigned on 9 September, and was replaced by General Rybiński. As Krukowiecki had remained in Warsaw, Bonaventura Niemojowski was elected President of the Government.

The new Commander-in-Chief hoped for a considerable reinforcement from the corps of Ramorino before undertaking new operations. But that general, instead of going towards the north, marched south and passed the Austrian frontier on the night of 16-17 September under Russian pressure. He entered the territory held by the Austrians at Chwałowice and surrendered together with his corps.

A few days later, on 21 September, the main forces left Modlin for Płock, where they were to cross to the left bank of the Vistula and march south, in order to continue the war after joining with the corps of Ramorino and Różycki. But the news of the disaster of the corps of Ramorino made them abandon that plan. Unwilling to capitulate to Paskevich, the Polish army crossed the Prussian frontier at Szczutów and Górzno on 5 October. There it surrendered to the Prussians, and then most of the officers and men went abroad, chiefly to France, while a few of the emigrants also settled in Great Britain.

The war had ended in defeat, in spite of the effort of the nation and the heroism of the soldiers, because there were no capable leaders to direct the movement successfully towards victory.

## CHAPTER XIV

### A. THE GREAT EMIGRATION

THE impulse of flight which manifested itself in the emigration of thousands of the Kingdom of Poland's best citizens after the fall of Warsaw in 1831 was as instinctive as the autumnal migration of birds and of the same dual character: a primordial urge, on the one hand, to escape destruction, and a quest, on the other, for renewal of energy and reinforcement of strength. It was undertaken in hope, as much as in fear, and those who fled had no notion when they abandoned their country that they would be away for long. They left the Kingdom in the sure conviction that they were serving the homeland better by fleeing than by remaining, and that they would be back in a few months, as their ancestors were in the days of Kościuszko, fighting in a Polish legion. The fugitives dreamed of "wreathing a new nest for the white-winged eagle of Poland" under the holy sky of France, and of avenging their fatherland's destruction with their own life-blood. "Not one of us," wrote an emigrant of 1831, "had he been able to foresee that our road was one leading to long and inglorious exile... but would have let himself be beaten to the last drop of blood, but would rather have died, than to have doomed himself voluntarily to the fate which lay in store for us."

The Polish exiles had every reason to believe they would find active support for their cause in France. They were confident that the French would assist them in forming a legion, if for no other reason than that of gratitude to the nation which, by timing its Uprising so advantageously, had blocked the Tsar's plan of sending an army to France to wipe out the fruits of the July Revolution. The Poles knew, moreover, that many in France believed Poland's cause to be their own: they had read repeatedly in the French press statements to the effect that France, in order to preserve for herself the blessings of liberty, should "assist everywhere the rising of the masses that wish to follow her example". Finally, the Poles had received more than once invitations like the one issued by General Lafayette after the fall of Warsaw: "We are ready to receive, if it be necessary, these noble scions of the nation which has fallen in our defence. May they find at our firesides, firesides of their own, and in our fair country their own dear motherland."

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The goal of most of the Polish fugitives was Paris, and for a few weeks they had no trouble in getting to it, since France erected at first no barrier at any of her borders. The route across Germany, moreover, was not only open but actually inviting. It was an age of ideologies, and the password of a partisan of Liberty was good in every country. Since everyone looked upon the Polish fugitives as soldiers in spirit, if not in fact, on the side of Liberty, these were greeted as friends all along the way in Germany by those who resented the terrible stagnation induced by the Metternich régime. Everywhere circles of "Friends of Poland" sprang up, banquets were arranged in honour of the emigrants, odes were recited praising their heroism, money was pressed into their hands and women flung themselves at their feet, so that by the time they reached France the Poles were well on the way to being spoiled.

There were many Poles in Paris to greet the Emigration. Leonard Chodźko was there, a warm friend of Lafayette and a member of the National Guard; so was Julius Słowacki, the brilliant young poet, and Frédéric Chopin, both of them fledglings of twenty-two, both haunted already, as so many of the later emigrants were, by a sense of being "Lord Jims". The chiefs of the old Polish legation were likewise in Paris, General Kniaziewicz and Ludwik Plater. These continued, though accredited diplomats no longer, to cultivate as private citizens any members of the Government who would receive them, especially the powerful President of the Chamber, Casimir Périer.

Legend has it that the Emigration reached Paris about 20 October 1831. On that day a young man, obviously foreign, his arm in a sling and his clothes travel-stained, appeared in the Faubourg Montmartre, crying, "Honneur à la Pologne!". Hearing his words the crowd quickly took up the theme, shouting, "Brave Polonais! Vive la Pologne!".

The young Pole of Montmartre was nameless and unknown. Soon, however, others of his race well known to fame arrived in Paris; on 24 October Bronisław Niemojowski, last President of the National Government; on the 29th Joachim Lelewel; on 2 November Maurycy Mochnacki and his brother Kamil.

Once in Paris, the leaders quickly made preparations for receiving the flood of refugees that they knew would soon arrive. Blocked by Périer from Government aid, Niemojowski turned to the Central Franco-Polish Committee of Lafayette for assistance, calling, at the same time, a meeting of the emigrants already in Paris for the purpose of founding their own Committee. The meeting took place on

6 November. It chose Niemojowski President and named four others to act with him as a Committee. Three out of the four chosen were, like Niemojowski, Conservatives; the fourth was the leader of the Democratic wing, Joachim Lelewel.

The Committee had scarcely been elected when the civil war began which was soon to tear the Emigration apart and prevent it from having any corporate usefulness. The Democratic group, already in secret contact with the various groups of the French Opposition, already nourishing seeds of general revolution, considered the Committee, with its Conservative majority and its dedication to a policy strictly non-political, nothing short of a monstrosity. On 18 November the war cry was sounded by Maurycy Mochnacki: "The Kaliszans lost Poland for us at home, now are we to behold the spectacle of them completing its loss abroad?"

By the middle of December the emigrant community had grown so large as to make a new election imperative. Since most of the newcomers belonged to the Democratic faction, the new Committee was a facsimile of the old Warsaw Patriotic Club, with Lelewel President and Mochnacki Secretary. It called itself the Permanent National Committee, and its headquarters were in the same building with Lafayette's Franco-Polish Committee. Leonard Chodźko served on both and acted as co-ordinator of the activities of the two groups.

One of the first acts of the National Committee was to issue, for the record, a public certificate attesting the purity of its own heritage. This it did in a decree of 25 December 1831, in which it fixed the blame for the Uprising's failure on the leaders of the Conservative wing and called on Liberals everywhere to march under the new leadership toward a new Poland. This decree marked the beginning of Lelewel's loss of prestige: no one could understand how he could promulgate such a document, since he himself was a member of the very Government it condemned for losing the Uprising.

The new year [1832] found some two hundred Poles in Paris, most of them destitute and without hope of future income. Generals Bem and Umiński were there also, to be joined toward the end of January by more than a thousand soldiers of the former Polish army. Bem's arrival buoyed up the flagging spirits of the exiles, but when it became clear, as it quickly did, that neither the King nor the Government wanted either the General or his soldiers and that no Polish legion would be allowed to form on French soil, despair spread over the emigrants like a malarial miasma.

Great numbers of the exiles now began to lack all but the barest

essentials of living: all that many of them had was the grudging food-and-rent allowance issued by Lafayette's Committee and distributed by Leonard Chodźko. Yet, neither then nor in the long years ahead, did they lack the daily nourishment of a purpose. Somehow the exiles managed to remember the reason for their exile: to keep the Polish cause alive, never to allow the Polish cause to die.

Each wing of the Emigration, the Aristocratic and the Democratic alike, tried to implement the general purpose in its own way.

Both began at once to promote sound cultural work. To this end the Democratic wing proposed to engage in a great publishing enterprise. Creating, on the last day of December 1831, a Scientific Association with Lelewel President and Mochnacki Secretary, it set in motion a scheme for bringing out a series of fifty volumes in the three principal European languages containing translations of Poland's most enduring literary works and essays on Polish literature and history. Mochnacki retired to Metz to work on the project, but, unhappily, for all its ambitious inauguration, the plan never produced anything beyond a half-finished prospectus and Mochnacki's own *History of the November Uprising*.

Stimulated by the news that Thomas Campbell and other influential friends of Poland had formed a Literary Association in London early in 1832, the Aristocratic wing likewise organized itself for the support of cultural propaganda. The first act of this group was to choose Prince Adam Czartoryski, who had not yet arrived in Paris, President, and Niemcewicz, the last president of the powerful Warsaw Association of the Friends of Learning, an honorary member. The purpose of the Association being to keep the Polish cause alive in the press, its membership was divided into sections, and each was instructed to cover a certain portion of the press. Thus the Association became an organ of protest before the bar of public opinion throughout Europe: like its rival, Lelewel's so-called National Government, it believed it had only to convince the people of Europe of the justice of the Polish cause and they would rise in arms to help at once.

To accomplish this end, each wing employed, besides the indirect methods outlined above, the method of attacking directly the problem which seemed to its members most likely to bring success. Thus the Democratic faction elaborated and cemented its contacts with liberal groups in France and Italy, Spain, Belgium, Portugal and Germany. The Aristocratic wing, at the same time, made use of its well-known friendships in all the courts of Europe, especially in the capital of European diplomacy at the moment, the Court of St James.

The high priest of those whose faith in Poland's future was founded on diplomacy was the most experienced Polish diplomat of his generation, Prince Adam Czartoryski. While the bulk of the Emigration was gathering in France, Czartoryski was in London. He had escaped from Cracow on 27 September 1831, disguised as one "George Hoffman". He had fled to Leipzig, stopped there to address a memorial to the Powers in explanation of Poland's collapse, conferred with Kniaziewicz and Plater of the Polish legation at the French border, and proceeded from there to England, arriving in London just in time to spend the first of many Christmas Eves in exile with his old friend and admirer, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, who had come to London with General Kościuszko.

Now Czartoryski's diplomacy devoted itself to two objectives: the first, an immediate one, to force the House of Commons to debate the Polish question openly; the second, less immediate but ultimately more important, to compel British statesmanship to recognize the Polish question as an integral and inseparable part of the greater question of the whole Near East.

Czartoryski was well received in British diplomatic circles, despite the hostile manœuvres of Poland's old enemy, the Princess Lieven. Through his friend Talleyrand he got to Palmerston without delay, meeting him first at a dinner given by Talleyrand himself and later, on 29 December, in the Foreign Office. Neither meeting proved satisfactory: Palmerston treated the Polish question with indifference, reminding Czartoryski that the Poles, by dethroning Nicholas, had forfeited whatever rights they might have had under the Treaty of Vienna. The Pole sensed at once that the Belgian question was the cause of Palmerston's obvious preoccupation and that this would have to be solved before anything could be done for Poland. He turned his attention, therefore, to the first objective of his London visit.

Three times during 1831 the Polish question had reared its head in the House, only to be withdrawn before it became a motion lest it embarrass the government in its ticklish negotiations with Russia over the Belgian question. Three times in 1832, by Czartoryski's urging, it came up again, raised on 18 April by Cutlar Fergusson, on 28 June by Lord Ebrington and on 7 August by Colonel Evans. On none of these occasions did anything happen beyond the hurling of unpleasant names at the Tsar and charges of timidity at the Government. Nothing was accomplished for Poland's cause beyond the mere keeping of it alive, and all Czartoryski had to show for months of activity was the assurance from Palmerston that Lord Durham's

mission to Russia in the summer of 1832 had for one of its objects the amelioration of the lot of the Poles under Nicholas.

There was one project with which both wings of the Emigration were sympathetic: the formation of a Polish legion. To this, as we have seen, General Bem began to dedicate himself from the moment of his arrival in Paris, only to find himself blocked. Forced to accept as valid for the whole nation the French Government's desire for peace at any price, Bem turned to Portugal and Belgium, hoping that in these unsettled countries a more friendly reception might be accorded him. Again his schemes were thwarted. When General Dembiński, hero of the war in Lithuania, arrived in Paris, he too took up the cause of a legion and for a while hope ran high that Mehemet Ali would allow one to form within the Egyptian army. This hope was quickly blasted by Russia's cunning hand and Dembiński turned to Spain, where the Carlist revolt was in progress. At first the Spanish government seemed cordial to Dembiński's proposal of a Polish legion within the Foreign Legion already fighting under the Spanish colours. Again pressure from Russia prevented the scheme's consummation.

Over and over again the project of a Polish legion was revived, always to be blocked. Yet the Emigration never abandoned the idea. Buoyed up by the hope that some day they would be allowed to fight *as Poles*, under a Polish banner, Polish men and Polish officers saw service in every army which fought in the cause of freedom—in Belgium, in Spain, in the Balkans, in Hungary, in the Near East, in the American Civil War. Only in Italy, in the year of the "spring of nations", did they ever realize their dream of a Polish legion, and then it was too late to do anything by means of that legion for Poland's resurrection.

In Paris, the capital of the Emigration, as in London, Poland's cause did not prosper during the first year of exile. A great blow to the prestige of Lelewel's National Committee, which considered itself the representative of the Polish nation, was delivered very early, when in April 1832 the French Government deliberately removed the Emigration from the jurisdiction of French law and placed it directly under the control of the French police. The Government had, by this time, to make some provision for the exiles out of the general budget, since the funds of the Lafayette Committee were beginning to dry up, and it seized this necessity as an opportunity to exercise control over an element it considered far too inflammable to be safe in the highly inflammable capital. In addition to changing the Emigration's legal status, the Government also issued a stringent order for the Poles to decentralize, shrewdly implementing the order by granting subsidies

to all who would move into the provinces. The Polish foundations in Lyons, Besançon, Avignon and Chantilly thus became greatly enlarged, and power began slowly to pass from the would-be dictators of Paris.

The order to disperse was, as may be imagined, galling to the pride of the Poles. It was likewise discouraging to their hopes, since the dearest purpose of those who were affected by it was to create a "little Poland" in exile, in order that revolution might be speedily renewed.

Though the order was a serious blow to this purpose it was not a fatal one, for the Lelewel Committee kept the idea alive through decrees and manifestos, some of which were protests issued simply as such, others specific outcries against some particular violation of liberty, as the one issued when freedom of the press was abridged in the province of Baden in the spring of 1832. While the Committee sent out decrees, uneasy spirits like the veteran Joseph Zaliwski publicly advocated immediate revolution, taking their stand on the principle that powerful courts like the English and French pay attention only to nations which *de facto* exist, and contrasting, in proof of the point, the warm interest these courts were, indeed, currently taking in Greece and Belgium with their lukewarmness toward Poland.

Thus, while Czartoryski laboured on the diplomatic front in London, Zaliwski and others of his conviction called upon their compatriots to repudiate the Czartoryski formula and to save themselves by armed uprising. Knowing there were still in Galicia and in Prussian Poland several thousand Poles who had seen military service, Zaliwski determined to make use of these to further his ideas. He began by sending emissaries, late in 1832, to both provinces of the old Polish realm and to the Polish colonies in France and Switzerland. These were to collect soldiers for an uprising in Russian Poland, Galicia and the Province of Posen (Poznań) being used as points of departure for the enterprise.

While the emissaries were making their way back to Poland, suffering a thousand hardships along the way, the Poles of Besançon, recalling their recent triumphal march through Germany, and having affiliations with the international organization of the Carbonari in Germany, made plans for an armed uprising in Frankfurt. They believed that the mere sight of a Polish uniform in the streets of that city would be the signal for a great rallying to arms of all liberal elements. One of the promoters of the Frankfurt Uprising was Karol Bogumil Stolzmann, who was living at that time in Switzerland.

Both the Galician Uprising and the Frankfurt were deplorable

mistakes and both had desperate consequences for the Poles themselves. These, together with more local examples of Polish uneasiness, confirmed the French Government in its feeling that the Polish element was dangerous, and it not only closed the door of return to those who took part in the miserable Frankfurt bluster, but looked with ever more wary eye upon the activities of the Polish Liberals, finally issuing a decree which forced them out of the country. Lelewel himself, the head of the National Government, fled to Belgium. In Galicia the Polish population paid even more bitterly for the ill-advised strategy of their compatriots. There the attempt to use Austrian soil as a base for hostile operations against Russia threw Austrian policy into a complete right-about-face, so that now the one portion of the divided realm which had been a haven became a place of nightmare as the police instituted a veritable reign of terror among Galicia's hitherto undisturbed population. The affair was one of the causes which led to the occupation of Cracow in 1836 by the armies of the three Partitioning Powers, and, ultimately, to the liquidation of the town's status as a Free City in 1846.

What Czartoryski was obliged to leave London in 1833 without accomplishing, the occupation of Cracow brought about: namely, a debate on the Polish question in the House of Commons. This took place on 18 March 1836, with all members of the House in agreement as to the violation of Poland's rights under the Treaty of Vienna, but with all, at the same time, seconding Lord John Russell's conviction that it would be unwise for the House "to come to a strong resolution unless it was prepared for worse". No action on Poland's behalf was taken, for everyone wanted peace; it was about this time that Eustachy Januszkiewicz, one of the founders of the Polish Publishing Company in Paris, declared that everybody had completely forgotten about the Poles.

It is not to be wondered at that Januszkiewicz felt thus, but he did not read the signs of the times aright, for it was only in the middle 'thirties that the forces which in the end kept the Poles from being forgotten really began to operate.

By that time some of the exiles were dead: Mochnacki was, and Claudine Potocka, the angel of the Emigration, whose money, poured out at first in Dresden, later in Paris, relieved the wretchedness of hundreds of her fellow-countrymen. By then most of the exiles who originally halted in Switzerland had dispersed across the face of Europe, many of the more liberal among them having found their way to England, there to be welcomed by such men as Mazzini, the poet

Thomas Wade and the Chartist William James Linton, there to agitate the cause of English as well as universal freedom. By that time, too, the first wave of the Emigration had reached the United States in the persons of the famous two hundred and forty-four refugees who were landed from Trieste at the port of New York in April 1834. By then, also, there were probably as many as four or five hundred Poles in England and Scotland, and their presence, pricking the conscience of men like Lord Dudley Stuart, kept Poland a living memory.

It was not until the middle 'thirties, moreover, that organization of the Emigration's multifarious constructive activities was perfected. By that time the Democratic wing had lost much of its leadership and most of the emigrants accepted Prince Adam Czartoryski as virtually their King. His headquarters were now in Paris, at the Hotel Lambert on the Island of St Louis, and here he began in 1834 to organize an unofficial Polish "government". To the maintenance of this "government" he was to dedicate his life.

Every variety of enterprise which governments normally sponsor Czartoryski undertook, carrying these out with funds supplied by himself, by his wife, by secret sympathizers in Poland and by friends in England. Schools were established, scholarships were provided, posts were found for the exiles, journals were published, philanthropic work including every branch of charity was organized and a complete diplomatic service was set up.

The activities of the latter branch of the "government" were varied and widespread. Its agents were in every country, gathering information for Czartoryski to use in his negotiations with friendly governments and watching for propaganda likely to harm the Polish cause. Thus Czartoryski was able, on the one hand, to keep the Vatican informed as to the treatment of Poles in the Russian area of Poland and to supply the British government with a special investigator of conditions in Asia Minor in the person of General Chrzanowski. He was able, on the other, to answer such unfavourable propaganda as Richard Cobden's famous pamphlet of a Manchester manufacturer on *Russia* (1835), in which it was argued that the fall of Poland was only "the triumph of justice" and her present fate "infinitely more happy than...if the nobility had succeeded in 1831 in imposing anew its iron yoke on the other classes of the inhabitants", making use of David Urquhart's celebrated *Portfolio* to accomplish this end.

The strategy underlying all Czartoryski's diplomacy was to make the Polish question a central issue of the two main problems agitating



Europe, namely the Near Eastern question and the rise of Liberalism. He hoped in this way not only to keep the question alive, but to bring about a just settlement of it.

Nothing Czartoryski undertook in the diplomatic field turned out advantageously for Poland. Though he was a very Cato in his denunciation of Russia's rising power in the East, seconding the fiery Urquhart in his effort to arouse Britain to curb it by supporting the brave Circassians, his work bore no fruit. Disappointed, he conceived and his agents elaborated schemes for a great union of the Slavs in the Balkans, seeing in this an organ which might serve as a check on Russia's hegemony in the Balkans. Later he took up with all seriousness the proposal of his romantic lieutenant Michael Czajkowski to create a Cossack regiment and use it against Russia to free not only the Ukraine, the ancient Cossack homeland, but Poland as well. The Congress of Paris at the close of the Crimean War was the answer to all Czartoryski's efforts; it did not even enter the Polish question among its agenda.

Czartoryski saw in the uneasiness generated by the Liberal movement in all the partitioning powers, particularly Prussia, his chance to bring about a successful rising, not of those "masses" on whom the democratic wing of the Emigration relied, but of all who wished to see Poland restored along aristocratic-monarchical lines as a block to Russia. The crisis in Germany in 1848-9 seemed the opportunity he had been waiting for so long, and he actually went himself to Berlin to watch developments, believing that a coalition of the enemies of Russia would be formed. This scheme, like all the others, came to naught.

The Emigration's part in saving Poland from national extinction was a conspicuous one, but as the dismal recital of the failure of one after another of Czartoryski's schemes demonstrates, cleverly conceived though many of them appeared to be, diplomacy was not the medium through which the Emigration was destined to make its telling contribution to this end. It proved to be neither the politicians nor the secret agents nor the diplomats of the Emigration who saved Poland, but the poets.

They did this by saving the only part of the nation's entity, which to have lost would have meant death. They saved Poland's soul. Besides performing the obvious service to their motherland of assuring it an unbroken literary tradition, a service important enough in itself, they gave the Polish people both abroad and at home a reason for faith in their nation's ultimate resurrection.

The poets of the Emigration, that is, gave their fellow-countrymen spiritual nourishment in an era when, if they had lacked it, they might have been tempted to abandon their lease on national immortality. The form this nourishment took was the assurance, repeated poetically again and again, that the catastrophe of 1831, far from abrogating Poland's historic right to existence, had but confirmed it, and had demonstrated as never before the nature of Poland's destiny as a state.

Both wings of the Emigration inherited a messianic conception of Poland's role in history and both had trusted it to bring them victory in the Uprising. Aristocrats and Democrats alike, whether they believed in the Uprising at first or not, fought bravely on the field of battle for their country, and held out to the end in the belief that by sacrificing themselves they were allowing time for divine intervention to become effective. Their confidence in divine intervention arose from the belief that the cause they defended was not an isolated one but that of all humankind, namely the cause of human freedom. The Aristocrats believed that divine succour would come through the agency of governments; the Democrats, through the spontaneous uprising of sympathetic populations.

Divine intervention did not come. The Poles saw their country, the nation chosen to bear the torch of Christian faith, as they believed, to the eastern frontier of Europe, deserted. They had to adjust their minds to grim reality: God had let the very instrument of His own purposes be destroyed.

The ten thousand or more individuals who made up the Emigration could not accept this fact as the final truth and go on living. They had to find a way out, and from this necessity for escape came a development in the conception of Poland's role in history.

Perhaps, it began to be murmured, Poland's very status of the "elect" among nations was the reason for the greater sacrifice required of her. Perhaps she was meant to be the Christ of nations, to die for the sins of all mankind, as Christ did, so that she might arise again not only to more abundant life herself but as the herald of God's Kingdom on earth.

The first of the poets of the Emigration to give significant expression to this extension of the messianic idea was Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), in the half-biblical *Books of the Polish Nation* which he wrote in 1832. Mickiewicz was undoubtedly the most popular Polish poet of his day. His *Farys*, an oriental poem extolling the free will, had powerfully influenced the young men who led the Uprising, and

## B. THE GREAT EMIGRATION AND POLISH ROMANTICISM

**A**LTHOUGH the romantic movement in Polish literature presents features common to the romanticism of western Europe and underwent the same influences, yet in Poland it took a course peculiar to itself. The romantic literature of Poland in certain of its characteristics stands alone among the literatures of Europe. It holds a unique position not only in the history of Polish literature, but in the history of the Polish nation. From its inception it showed a tendency to nationalism, inevitable in the literature of a conquered country. That tendency, with the growing strain of the relations between Poland and Russia, became increasingly marked, until after the defeat of the Rising of 1830 and the redoubled persecution of the Polish nationality that was its sequence, the literature of Poland developed into that marvellous haunting song of a nation in bondage which stands forth not only as a noble artistic creation, but as the sublime expression of a nation's faith.

The romantic period of Polish literature covers, roughly speaking, the thirty years between the two great national insurrections in 1830 and 1863. After the fall of Warsaw in 1831, with few exceptions Poland's writers went into exile. Many of them had fought in the Rising, and others on account of their political opinions were forced to leave their country. This exodus is known in Polish history as the Great Emigration. Paris became the centre of the national life which was proscribed and penalized in Poland itself, and which could only be carried on by her exiles beyond the boundaries of the partitioning powers. The great romantic literature of Poland therefore presents the anomaly of being written outside the country to which it belonged, but where it was forbidden either to be published or read. Hence, this, the greatest period of Polish literature, may with equal truth be called the penalized period of Polish literature. Banned by the Russian censorship, it was smuggled by colporteurs into Poland, read in secret under lock and key, then burnt or hidden for fear of the Russian police. Those who were found reading or possessing such works as those of Mickiewicz or Krasiński were sent to prison or Siberia. Often, for the sake of safety to the reader, the real meaning of these writings was concealed under the form of allegory or a symbolism that the reader understood, but that eluded the Russian censor. This patriotic symbolism may often be met with in the romantic period, and does not die wholly out

of Polish literature until the removal of the censorship in 1905. The proscribed literature written by Poland's banished sons was the only means of keeping the national ideals alive, of teaching the Polish youth their persecuted and forbidden heritage, of saving the nation from atrophy and despair and the moral destruction of a conquered people. The Polish poets became the moral leaders of the nation. The preservation of the nationality of Poland, which was the object of a persecution enduring for a century and a half, the final restoration of a nation that had been obliterated from the map of Europe, may without outstepping the limits of historical truth be in great measure ascribed to such upholders of the Polish national ideals as the three great poets of the romantic period, Mickiewicz, Krasiński and Słowacki.

The two main characteristics of Polish romantic literature are its patriotism and its mysticism, the one so closely blended with the other as to be inseparable. This literature was founded on suffering, both personal and national. The majority of the Polish exiles lived in great poverty. They were cut off from family, friends, and home as though by a Chinese wall. They passed their days in a state of perpetual suspense, looking to every political event to save Poland and to hasten the hour of their return to their country. Fruitless attempts were made to cross the frontier and organize another rising, which invariably ended in Siberia or on the scaffold. The spectacle of the persecution that ground down the nation was always before the eyes of men and women whose personal sorrows were the result of devotion to that nation. Therefore an impassioned patriotism that takes the sacred lineaments of a religion became the basic principle of Poland's romantic literature. The poet whose work was not expressive of his love for his country was an exception to the rule and liable to be a scandal to his compatriots. If at earlier moments of this period the influence of Byron, albeit nationalized, is evident, in measure as the persecution of the nation redoubled and Polish minds were increasingly occupied with the national tragedy the traces of Byronism die or become transmogrified in the fires of patriotism. Inevitably penetrated with tragedy, only in rare instances does the literature of oppressed Poland approach pessimism. It will indeed frequently, as in Wincenty Pol's *Songs of Janusz* and in other poems of the Rising, ring with the virile tones of a soldier's song. It is irradiated with an unswerving hope. That hope sublimated and spiritualized is the foundation of the great national mysticism which, although we may find its earlier foreshadowings in Polish literature, rose at this time, and under the name of Messianism gave the romantic poetry of

Poland its peculiar beauty. When every avenue of hope was barred to the Polish nation, her poets, her only spokesmen and her only teachers in the abnormal conditions under which she groaned, pointed to a new road of salvation. They taught that Poland was called to the mission of a chosen people whose sufferings were to be the earnest of the nation's resurrection and of the political regeneration of the universe, which should ensue on the reparation of the wrong done to Poland. This spiritual nationalism conferred upon an enslaved nation a sense of her own dignity, ennobling and interpreting her sufferings, and giving her confidence in a better future. Moreover it held its strong appeal to the innate patriotism of the Pole who saw the country he loved with a human love, for which he pined with the homesickness of the exile, transfigured into that form of unearthly beauty, to which his poets gave the name of "Holy Poland".

The romantic poetry of Poland is therefore fundamentally national as regards its psychology; and at this period two other elements are noticeable that contribute to the building up of a great national heritage: the use of folk tradition and the rise of regionalism. We find Poland's greatest poets drawing on folklore and prehistoric legend for poem and play. The influence of regionalism is still more marked. Lithuania is inseparable from Mickiewicz. The eastern borderlands, always beloved of the Pole if only for their secular position as Poland's outpost against Tartar and Turk, inspired the so-called Ukrainian school. Mazovia had her own poet.

Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855) opened his career by his *Ode to Youth*, a clarion call to the young to abjure egoism and to lead humanity on a new road. But his fame was first established by ballads which after the romantic fashion of the day attracted his pen, and which in his case were founded on Lithuanian legends. The setting of his Lithuanian home became the background of the greater part of his poetical creation. The earlier Acts (Parts I, II and IV) of his unfinished drama *Forefathers' Eve*, in which he pours out the complaint of his disappointed love, have as their motive the semi-pagan Lithuanian rites on All Souls' Night: while the somewhat cold epic *Grasyna*—a hark-back on the part of a young romantic poet to classical models—is the apotheosis of a Lithuanian heroine. From the outset Mickiewicz devoted himself to practical work for his nation which he carried on until his death. His leadership in the secret student societies of the University of Wilno, the aims of which, albeit ultimately patriotic, were primarily social and philanthropic, incurred the suspicion of the Russian government. Together with the other young men

in the confraternity, Mickiewicz was arrested, and after six months of imprisonment finally banished to Russia. His lifelong exile then began.

In Russia he became the friend of the Decembrists, to whom in after years he bade a mournful farewell in the lines *To My Russian Friends*. His poetic genius made rapid strides. His eighteen *Crimean Sonnets* are pearls of Polish literature, full of exquisite word paintings, intermingled with the note of yearning for his lost love and country. These were followed by his second national epic, *Konrad Wallenrod*. Superficially Byronic, this poem is in reality the cry of a conquered people, the poet veiling the psychology of national vengeance under the form of the traditional conflict between Lithuania and the Teutonic Knights. The disguise was seen through, and Mickiewicz was only saved by flight from Russia. He then wandered in western Europe, and on the eve of the Rising of 1830 wrote one of the most powerful of Poland's patriotic poems, *To the Polish Mother*: a lamentation for the children of the conquered. The defeat of the insurrection gave birth to his great national drama, which is also largely autobiographical, the Third Part of *Forefathers' Eve*. It consists of a series of dramatic scenes, of which the persecution of the Lithuanian youth, related with the vividness of personal recollection, is the connecting link. The lovelorn Gustavus of the earlier play is reborn in a Russian prison into a Konrad, Mickiewicz's own prototype, whose personal sufferings are drowned in anguish for his country. That anguish reaches its height in the famous *Improvisation*, in which the prisoner poet, soaring on the wings of poetic ecstasy, hurls the defiance of his broken heart against his Creator. The play is impregnated with mysticism, and enunciates in visionary form the messianistic theory of Poland's vicarious suffering. To the enduring loss of Polish literature it remains unfinished.

In 1832 Mickiewicz joined the Emigration in Paris. Already recognized as the great national poet, he now wrote a manual of moral guidance for his fellow exiles, *The Books of the Polish Nation and of the Polish Pilgrimage*. This little book, in Biblical prose, composed for the most part of aphorisms and parables, profoundly influenced Polish minds from Mickiewicz's day to ours. Again for the members of the Emigration, but this time to distract their minds and his from the tragic present, Mickiewicz wrote his *Thaddeus*, an epic in twelve books of flawless verse on the quiet life of the Lithuanian countryside of his boyhood, closing with the march of Napoleon's Polish legions in 1812 through Lithuania to Russia, which was the

poet's own heroic recollection. The flexible Polish language becomes in Mickiewicz's handling a musical instrument, capable of expressing every emotion from the profoundest depths of human passion to the homely happenings of rustic life. The descriptive passages of *Thaddeus*, notably the roar of the storm lashing the Lithuanian forests, the echo of the hunter's horn, the playing of the cymbal by the Polish Jew, are recited wherever the Polish tongue has travelled. *Thaddeus* is the greatest and the most loved poem in the literature of Poland.

From 1840 to 1844 Mickiewicz held the Chair of Slavonic Literature at the *Collège de France*. In 1841 he became the apostle of a system of mysticism inaugurated by the Lithuanian mystic Towiański, which gained many adherents among the Polish Emigration. Believing he could do more for his nation by his religious-political work than by his poetry, he devoted the remainder of his life to this object, and his poetic genius was silenced. In 1848 he attempted to organize a Polish legion in Italy, and while engaged in raising a similar legion in Turkey to take up arms against Russia in 1855, he died in Constantinople. His fame is that of the greatest of Poland's poets: who is the embodiment in Polish eyes of the national ideals, revered by every Pole as the moral leader of the nation during the years of its captivity.

Julius Słowacki (1809-49) was driven out of Poland by the events of 1830, and lived in lifelong exile. He ranks second only to Mickiewicz, and as an artist in words, he is at times his equal. He began by being a somewhat slavish imitator of Byron, and was also strongly under the influence of Scott, Shakespeare and Calderon in turn. But although, except in the closing period of his life, always more dependent on western European models than either Mickiewicz or Krasiński, his work became as representative of national psychology as theirs. His range of subjects is more cosmopolitan than that of his contemporaries, his versatility greater. It was he who gave Poland her first great dramas, *Balladyna*, *Lilla Weneda*, and *Mazepa*. The two former are both founded on Polish prehistoric legend. *Balladyna* is the first play in Polish literature to combine fairy lore with serious drama. Its delicate fairy fancies play round a tragedy of crime and ambition that is full of colour and life and skilful dramatization. The lyric beauty of *Lilla Weneda*, its easily discernible patriotic purpose, with its concluding superb disdainful phrase of a nation in chains, places it with the masterpieces of Poland's romantic literature. The earlier drama *Kordyan* hangs too loosely together to constitute a play in the technical sense of the term. A bitter sarcasm on the weak sides of the Polish character—for, in contradistinction to Mickiewicz and Krasiński,

Śłowacki was a severe critic of his nation—it shows considerable acuteness of insight; and individual scenes, for example, that of the attempted assassination of the Tsar when the conspirator's nerve fails him at the crucial moment, are alone enough to prove Śłowacki's dramatic sense.

Śłowacki shared the predilection of the romantic poets for the epic, and chose that form for his *Beniowski*. Modelled on Byron and Ariosto, the poem has for its background the war of the Bar Confederation, related with the fantastic colouring characteristic of Śłowacki. The story is subsidiary, the basis upon which the poet, an aloof and satirical observer of the life around him, pours out his opinions upon the men and politics of the epoch. Its flights of fancy, its caustic wit, often taking the form of sarcastic diatribes against his critics, its humour, a rare element in romantic Polish literature, are tempered with the yearning of the exile for a lost and loved country; the tender lines to his mother are the jewel of a brilliant if difficult poem. Many of Śłowacki's shorter poems are among the finest in Polish literature, notably his *Hymn at Sea off Alexandria*, the majestic dirge on the transportation of Napoleon's remains from St Helena, and *The Father of the Plague-stricken*. The ethereal beauty of *In Switzerland* ranks it as the supreme love poem in the Polish language. Poetic prose was also handled by Śłowacki with consummate skill. *Anielli*, the mystic journey through Siberia of the youth who is the expiatory victim for his country, is a masterpiece of its kind, and *The Genesis from the Spirit*, a spiritualized foreshadowing of the doctrine of evolution with its bearing on Polish nationalism, is pure poetry in the form of prose. Like other Polish romantics, Śłowacki towards the end of his life gave himself up to mysticism. Its influence is apparent in the two historical dramas *Father Marek* and *The Silver Dream of Salomea*, which are permeated with the poet's mystic theories on miracles and dreams. In his later days he conceived the design of writing a mystic epic of vast dimensions upon the successive transformations of the spirit of Poland in the persons of her sovereigns through the course of her history. This work, *The King Spirit*, clothed in an exquisite poetic diction, was left in fragments at Śłowacki's premature death, and given to the world by the piety of Polish scholarship.

Zygmunt Krasiński (1812-59), unequal as a poet to Mickiewicz and Śłowacki, as great if not greater as an exponent of Poland's spiritual nationalism, holds a peculiar position in the history of his nation. Owing to his father's adhesion to the Russian government, Krasiński, himself an ardent patriot, passed the greater part of his



life in voluntary exile, compelled by his father's attitude to conceal his authorship under an anonymity that gained him the title of the Anonymous Poet. At the age of twenty-one he wrote a work of genius, a prose drama, entitled *The Undivine Comedy*: a pitiless exposition of the moral ineptitude of an individual character and of contemporary society overwhelmed by the social revolution which Krasiński depicts almost literally, nearly a hundred years before the event. If only for the restraint of its style, the play stands out as a complete contrast to the subsequent writings of a poet whose fault is over-elaboration. Possessed by the spectacle of his nation's agony, Krasiński's work, with only inappreciable deviations, was henceforth devoted to the solution of the enigma of Poland's fate, by which he might strengthen the hearts of his compatriots. In his second great drama *Iridion*, under the allegory of a Greek plotting the ruin of his conqueror Rome by ignoble means, the Anonymous Poet entreats his people to abjure the weapons of hatred in their struggle for their freedom. After years of subsequent wandering in spiritual darkness, mainly engendered by the sight of his country's sufferings, he wrote in commemoration of his having won to light his poem *Dawn*. Opening it with a noble exposition in prose of his national creed, founded on the logical basis that Krasiński, who was above all a philosophical thinker, always exacted, he proceeds in a series of lyrics to set forth in accents of rapture messianic visions of the mission and resurrection of Poland. This poem gave Krasiński his place with Poland's greatest poets and moral leaders.

After the publication of *Dawn* his poems became of a more episodal nature. His first three *Psalms of the Future*, the *Psalm of Love*, followed by the *Psalm of Faith* and the *Psalm of Hope*, were written as a warning against the social revolutionary propaganda that ended in the catastrophe of the Galician massacres in 1846: the two later Psalms, the *Psalm of Grief* and the *Psalm of Good Will*, in the anguish of seeing his forebodings fulfilled. The *Psalm of Good Will*, a sublime prayer for the spiritual salvation of his country, is the culminating point of Krasiński's work for his nation, and the fitting close of the great messianistic poetry of Poland. Never a prolific writer, Krasiński still from time to time sent forth fresh utterances, always urging the same ideals upon his people; but his later works add nothing to what he had already said with greater power. Among these however two stand out for their dignity and beauty: *Resurrecturis*, the poet's entreaty to his country to adopt the highest calling of a martyred nation, and the lines to his wife, *To Elżse*,

in which faith in a beloved woman and in his nation's resurrection become identical.

Among the galaxy of lesser poets that contributed to give the romantic period its title to be called the richest epoch of Polish literature, the poets of the Ukrainian school, Malczewski, Goszczyński and Bohdan Zaleski, occupy a conspicuous place. The work of the young Byronic poet, Antoni Malczewski (1793-1826) belongs to the dawn of romantic literature, his one great poem *Marya* having been written in 1825. This poem is the first of the Ukrainian school to depict the romantic melancholy of the steppes, which became a favourite topic with later writers. If the undercurrent of national passion that beats beneath the poetry of the Emigration is necessarily absent from *Marya*, and deprives it of spiritual kinship with the work of the other poets of the Ukrainian school, yet Malczewski was a true example of Polish romanticism, nationalizing characteristics of Byron and Scott, and leading the way to a type of epic that his fellow poets adopted after him. Severyn Goszczyński (1801-76) wrote lyrics on the Rising of 1830, in which he played a prominent part, that are among the best of its poems; but his lyrics are inferior to his story in verse *The Castle of Kanów*, where he gives lurid pictures of the Ukrainian Cossack uprising in 1768, and *The King of the Castle*, an allegory and satire in prose on the history and the future salvation of Poland. His fiery and rebellious temperament, that later immersed itself in the Towianistic mysticism, affected the manner and matter of his work to the detriment of its artistic quality. In both verse and prose he was the pioneer of the literary regionalism of the Polish Carpathians which became a feature of a succeeding epoch. The treatment of Ukrainian themes by Bohdan Zaleski (1802-86) is the antithesis to Goszczyński's gloomy and harsh manner. To Zaleski the Ukraine is song and music. His mastery of rhythm gives him a place of honour in the national literature. But his sweetness is wont to become cloying and his restricted range of ideas monotonous; and in his most ambitious poem *The Spirit of the Steppe* he is unable to maintain the level of the poetical and ethereal opening.

Mazovia found its singer in Teofil Lenartowicz (1822-93). His special predilection was for the peasantry of that province, who in an idealized form are his constantly recurring theme. He rises to no heights, but is a pleasing lyricist, like Zaleski apt to be monotonous. His peasant trilogy *The Ecstasy*, *The Blessed Soul*, *Holy Work*, the two first named a vision of the other world seen through a peasant woman's eyes, has the naïve charm exacted by its

subject. His best poem *The Battle of Racławice* is likewise related from a peasant standpoint, but with the spirit of a soldier of Kościuszko. Influenced by the supreme singer of Lithuania, Adam Mickiewicz, Ludwik Kondratowicz (1823-62), better known by his pen name of Syrokomla, wrote tales in easy verse of the rustic life in Lithuania that was his own. The simple attractiveness of such stories as *Jan Dęboróg* and *A Piece of Bread* had a wide appeal in his day. Wincenty Pol (1807-72) concentrates the spirit of regionalism in his *Song of Our Land*, a poetic geography of Poland from the pen of a man who was a geographical specialist, and which familiarized Polish children with the physical and moral features of their country. His best work however is in his *Songs of Janusz*, a collection of patriotic and soldiers' songs on the Rising of 1830, where he avoids both the sentimentality of Zaleski and the roughness of Goszczyński. These poems gained an extraordinary popularity which maintains to this day. *At Stoczek Cannon Thunder* and *Leaves Are Falling from the Trees*, which latter was sung repeatedly during the dark years between the two Risings, have acquired the dignity of national songs.

Neither in mentality nor in style is the artist, sculptor and poet Cyprian Norwid (1821-83) in line with his contemporaries. The obscure and elliptic language in which he conveys his wealth of ideas makes his work difficult reading, and his appeal was never to the general public. His principles on art, some of which anticipate those of William Morris, are built up into a national system which he elaborated in his didactic poem *Promethidion*. Many of his lyrics, breathing deep religious feeling and love of his country, are of outstanding and original beauty. His *Chopin's Piano*, opening with the dying musician's delicate touch on the keys, ending with the crash of the piano as it was flung by the Cossacks on the Warsaw pavements; his rhapsody on Bem, in which so masterly is his use of sound and rhythm that we can almost hear the clash of the funeral arms; are immortal possessions of Polish literature. On the other hand Kornel Ujejski (1823-97) is more psychologically akin to the great poet leaders of the nation, although he survived them into another generation. The work by which his name lives, *The Complaints of Jeremiah*, inspired by the Galician massacres of 1846, belongs to the romantic period. Out of this cycle of poems the famous *Choral* passed into the treasury of Poland's national hymns to become the supreme favourite of the Polish nation during her bondage. The young poet Mieczysław Romanowski (1834-63), who proved the fiery patriotism that is the characteristic of his work—the lyrics *Poland's Hymn* and *The Song of Poland's*

*Youth* are fine examples of his style—by his death on a battlefield of the Rising of 1863, may be regarded as the last inheritor of Poland's great romantic poetry.

It is a curious fact that Poland's best comedy was produced at this period of national tragedy. The witty and sparkling plays of Alexander Fredro (1793–1876) are totally unaffected by contemporary conditions. In part influenced by Molière, they are full of national colouring and fidelity to Polish type. Especially admirable are his masterpiece *Vengeance*, of which the plot is a quarrel between an irascible yet generous Polish squire and a troublesome neighbour, and *Maidens' Vows*, a diverting story of a young man's stratagems in love. Józef Korzeniowski (1797–1863) wrote plays of merit which forsake classical types for more modern characterization. *The Mountaineers of the Carpathians* with its songs and local colour still retains its popularity.

Although the Romantic period of Polish literature is above all distinguished for its poetry, its fiction, less hampered by the censorship and more easily reaching every class of reader, played its own part in keeping the national spirit alive. Józef Kraszewski (1812–87) is justly held to have been the father of the Polish novel. His several hundreds of novels embrace the history of Poland from its dawn up to the social life of his own day. *An Old Tale* on prehistoric Poland still holds a high place in Polish literature. His work was turned out too hastily to approach artistic perfection, but it was the groundwork for the great school of Polish fiction which rose after 1863, and is invaluable as a record of every phase of Polish life in the course of the nineteenth century. Many of his novels, among which *The Hut Outside the Village*, pleading the cause of the gipsy outcast, and *A Novel Without a Title*, the story of a poet pitted against reality, may be singled out, are still eminently readable, and the fiction that he poured out in spate with a patriotic purpose did its moral and national work. Korzeniowski besides drama wrote novels of manners, *The Speculator* and *Relations* being his best. Burdened by a cumbrous narrative and by the labour of fitting his characters into moral niches, they display a knowledge of human nature and give pictures of Polish society which still make them interesting reading. Historical fiction that was to reach its splendour in a later generation had its representatives in the Romantic period. The novels of Henryk Rzewuski (1791–1866) on eighteenth century Poland, *November* and the entertaining *Memoirs of Seweryn Soplica*, found great favour with his contemporaries. Michał Czajkowski (1807–86), otherwise Sadyk Pasha, whose restless career was stranger than fiction, wrote tales chiefly on the history of

## CHAPTER XV

### THE POLISH PROVINCES OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA AFTER 1815; THE "SPRINGTIME OF NATIONS"

WHEN the Congress Kingdom was created, the Polish nation firmly believed that this was only the beginning of a union of all the Polish lands under the sceptre of the Czar Alexander. The provinces annexed by Austria and Prussia lived in constant expectation of union with the Congress Kingdom, and therefore hardly cared to create their own centres of political and cultural activity. They were drawing strength from Warsaw, at that time not only the capital of the new kingdom, but also the spiritual centre of all Poland. Vienna and Berlin, afraid of losing their Polish provinces, were compelled, the first in a slight, the second in a larger degree, to satisfy the national aspirations of their Polish subjects. After the November insurrection, however, the kingdom lost its constitutional liberties, was ruled by Paskevitch and ceased to be a centre of attraction. Austria and Prussia could now institute in their own Polish provinces a system of germanization and repression. But side by side with this came the great awakening of Polish national feeling in both. Their sympathy with the aspirations of 1831 grew into an obstinate struggle for national self-preservation. The Great Emigration familiarized the nation with the ideas of a fresh insurrection and of democracy. The eighteen-thirties and 'forties were for Galicia an epoch of conspiracies and persecutions; for Poznań, of intensive effort for economic and cultural improvement.

The strengthening of the Polish element made these two provinces the centre of the revolutionary movement of 1848, which aimed at the reconstruction of Poland. It was the "Springtime of Nations", the turning-point in modern European history, and Poland once more commanded international attention. Poles were fighting on the barricades almost all over the Palatinate, Baden, Piedmont, Sicily and Hungary, occupying leading positions. Polish military formations were organized in France, Italy and Hungary. The Polish question was debated by the National Assembly in Paris, in the German Parliament in Frankfort and at the Slavonic Congress in Prague. In the first months of the revolution it endangered relations between

Prussia and Russia, and in 1849 it was a considerable cause of Nicholas' intervention in Hungary. European interest in the Polish question was partly due to the activities of the *émigrés*, among whom were Czartoryski, Mickiewicz, Mieroslawski, Bem and Dembiński. The share of Galicia and of Poznań in the events of 1848-9 gives the best evidence of the national consciousness which the Poles kept in spite of bondage.

### THE POLISH PROVINCES ANNEXED BY AUSTRIA

When Galicia was created by the Congress of Vienna it possessed about 77,000 square kilometres with quite 3,500,000 people. It was distinctly agricultural, although the number of towns was out of proportion to that of the villages. Lwów had only 40,000 inhabitants, and many of the towns were partly occupied with agriculture. The true town population consisted almost entirely of foreign bureaucrats, German settlers and Jews, in whose hands trade and crafts were concentrated; the Polish bourgeoisie and professional intelligentsia hardly formed a nucleus. The gentry and peasantry were sharply differentiated in legal, social and economic status. The gentry, who under the Republic had boasted the greatest privileges and liberties in Europe, had now only the exclusive right to property in land and a greatly limited patrimonial power over the peasants. After the Congress of Vienna this class was financially much embarrassed. Destruction brought about by the wars, the fall in the price of corn, the lack of credit and of markets for agricultural products, and the heavy burden of taxes brought them near to ruin. Deep in debt, they could not introduce modern methods of management. Life among the peasants was more than miserable. Owing to the small acreage of land per head, the burden of socage to the landlord, of fiscal and military obligations to the state, frequent natural disasters and, above all, the prevailing ignorance, helplessness and the use of primitive methods in agriculture, the Galician peasant had bread only for a few months, living for the rest of the year on potatoes, and, on the eve of harvest, partly on grass and bark. But this ignorant and passive peasantry constituted a dangerous opposition to the existing social order. Under the influence of the Uniat clergy and the Austrian bureaucracy, the Ruthenians, massed in Galicia, became aware that they were nationally distinct from the Poles.

Public life was feeble. Much of Galicia had come under foreign rule at the First Partition. Only faint and occasional echoes of the re-

vival of the Republic in the days of the Permanent Council, the Great Parliament and the insurrection of Kościuszko passed the Galician border. Their claims at Vienna, however, show that the Galician gentry were influenced by these events. The draft of the constitution, the so-called "Charta Leopoldina" (1790), likewise attests the widening of political horizons, but also the striking contrast between the dull passivity with which the nation accepted the Austrian occupation in 1772 and the enthusiastic welcome given to the Polish army in 1809. This part of the country belonged to the Duchy of Warsaw only for a few years, a period too short to change collective psychology, or to strengthen the people against the approaching rule of the Habsburg Monarchy. Of the three foreign governments ruling over Poland none was then so hard on the Poles as the Austrian. The leading ideas for the dependent countries were a bureaucratic police administration, with moderate "Josephinism" in church relations and the intention of germanizing the Slavonic and Romance population. These principles were applied with particular intensity to the Polish element, which together with the Italian was regarded as the most dangerous for the Monarchy. Metternich expressed the opinion of the highest Vienna circles when he said: "Polonism is only a formula, the sound of a word underneath which hides a revolution in its most glaring form; it is not a small part of a revolution, but revolution itself. Polonism does not declare war on the monarchies which possess Polish territory, it declares war on all existing institutions and proclaims the destruction of all the common foundations which form the basis of society." In Lombardy and Venice the Austrian government also put down all manifestations of Italian patriotism, but at the same time it provided for the adequate administration and the economic development of the country, while in Galicia its activities were directed towards the political and economic destruction of the Polish nation. The omnipotent German-Czech bureaucracy represented the worst element of the Monarchy, consisting chiefly of people with an inferior education, without manners, morally weak and anxious for an easy and rapid career. They had no knowledge of the essential needs of the country and considered it their absolute duty to suppress all Polish initiative and independence. In their eyes, the Poles were conspirators, revolutionists, and barbarians in need of German culture. In Viennese eyes Poland consisted of "swamps, woods and marshes on which wolves and bears swarm in packs and endanger the roads".

Austrian concessions came from fear of Alexander I, who was suspected of a plan of unification of all the lands of the former Re-

public. They therefore decided in 1817 to restore the provincial Estates, which had existed in the time of Joseph II. These consisted of the representatives of the higher clergy, the magnates, the gentry and two deputies of Lwów, with exceedingly limited functions; but their practical significance was nil, since the representations of the assembly were ignored. The government undertook the reconstruction of the University of Lwów, the foundation of several grammar schools and the ratification of the Ossoliński National Institute. Further concessions were made by Nicholas I, when the relations between Austria and Russia underwent a rapid change. But apart from these transitory ameliorations, due to the international situation, the government was utterly destructive of Polish nationality. Offices were held mainly by Germans and germanized Czechs; German colonization was fervently promoted, the German and Latin languages ruled in schools, courts and administration. The Roman-Catholic clergy was degraded to the position of government officials. A meticulous and irritating censorship controlled the intellectual life of the country, while Metternich's bureaucracy squeezed disproportionate taxes out of the people and kept them in stagnation and poverty. In vain the parliament entreated the government to found an Agricultural Credit Society, to build railroads and to mitigate the fiscal pressure. In time a definite theory was evolved, that Galicia was to be a market for the industrial products of the Austrian and Czech provinces, and to supply corn and cattle to other countries of the monarchy.

While refusing the Poles an active part in public and economic life, the government was stirring up the social and national differences in the country. "My peoples", said Francis I, "are strangers . . . Of their dislike, order is born; and of their mutual hatred, universal peace." This principle, "*Divide et impera*", was applied by the Austrian bureaucracy in two ways. Since the gentry was the only class in Polish society whose national conscience was fully awake, Austria tried to create a gulf between the manor and the cottage. The gentry was burdened with functions hated by the peasants, such as the police jurisdiction in local cases, the collecting of taxes and the enlistment of recruits. But the government retained the final decision in all these matters, compelling the landlords to appoint and pay special officials, called mandatories, who were dependent on the Austrian sheriffs. Likewise the authorities protected the peasant from the oppression of field-service, but prevented the gentry from improving the financial condition of the peasantry and from reforming the relationship of



serfdom. The peasant, facing the class-egoism of the gentry and its indifference to his fate, saw in the Austrian official his protector and learned to stress that he was not Polish but "imperial". Maria Theresa and Joseph II turned to the Ruthenian population for support against Russian propaganda and Polish Irredentism. In Napoleonic times a legend was created of the Ruthenians as the "Tiroleans of the East" contrasted with the unreliable Poles. To this the Metropolitan of Halicz, Angellewicz, chiefly contributed, and his successor, Archbishop Lewicki, continued his policy and secretly prepared an alliance of the Ruthenians with the Austrian bureaucracy against the Poles.

From the Congress of Vienna till 1830, Galicia made no definite manifestation of the national spirit. In literature there appear some promising beginnings of its later flowering in the varied activities of the national drama in Lwów, under the management of J. N. Kamiński, and in the first works of A. Fredro, the greatest Polish writer of comedies. Utter stagnation reigned in politics. The Polish aristocracy lived mostly in Vienna, the gentry was absorbed in its economic difficulties, the Estates led a sterile existence and the revolutionary organizations in the Congress Kingdom found only a weak echo in Galicia. But still this epoch was not lost to the life of the nation. In the depth of its collective soul new powers were accumulating, and the surprising aspirations revealed by the November insurrection were gaining strength. Austria, having quarrelled with Russia over the Eastern question, did not punish the Polish population in Galicia with severity. In places the authorities confiscated arms and interned insurrectionists who had crossed the frontier, but they left much liberty to the Galician Poles to help the insurgents. This friendly attitude was shown particularly by the governor of Galicia, Prince Lobkowitz, who had the confidence of Metternich's powerful antagonist, Count Kolowrath, known for his anti-Russian feeling. Having arrived in Galicia in 1826 with the intention of winning the population for the Habsburgs against Nicholas, the Prince appeared publicly in the Polish nobleman's cloak, spoke Polish when delivering his opening speech in the provincial assembly, and after the outbreak of the insurrection (1830) roused the most daring hopes. Thanks to his double-faced policy, a committee in Lwów undertook the work of sending arms, ammunition and sanitary supplies, while the Vistula legion was formed with Galician money, and besides former Polish officers, students, artisans, even sons of German officials, hurried to the scene of action. A powerful outbreak of national feeling greeted the entry

of the insurgent battalions of Dwernicki, and later those of Różycki and Ramorino, into Galicia. After the failure of the insurrection, several thousand emigrants from the Congress Kingdom found shelter in Austria. They were to play an important part in the material progress, the literature and the revolutionary activities of the nation. Roused from its torpor, Galicia energetically betook itself to work in every field. Its leading figure became Prince Leo Sapieha, who, with the support of an enlightened circle, gave the first impulse to many valuable enterprises.

The Estates worked with heightened activity. The government rejected proposals for railroads, the regulation of rivers, navigation on the Dniester, the introduction of the Polish language into schools and courts, yet permitted the foundation of three important institutions: the Credit Society, the Savings Bank and the Economic Society, which included all the landed gentry. The foundation of a technical Academy in Lwów marks the beginning of industrialization. Landlords introduced temperance societies, notwithstanding their right to draw profits from the village inn. In 1843 the Estates discussed the reform of peasant serfdom. Through the ill-will of the government, which desired tension between peasant and nobleman, the election of a committee with a very limited sphere of activity was accomplished only on the eve of the fratricidal massacre, which stained Galicia with blood.

The work of political conspiracy developed in Galicia parallel with all these activities. The conspirators saw the main hope for liberty in the propagation of democratic ideas and the preparation of the nation for a future revolution. The impulse to work on these lines was given mainly by insurgents of 1830, who settled in Galicia, or the emissaries of the Great Emigration. Only the peasant, who was distrustful and enticed by the Austrian officials, and the lower middle-class, with little national consciousness, remained outside the movement. Intellectuals, undergraduates and school boys, however, joined it in large numbers, while aristocratic names were not lacking. Sons of the foreign bureaucracy, who were becoming polonized, and many Ruthenians, who realized also the advantage of co-operation with the Poles, trained a whole generation of their future agents in the catacombs of Polish conspiracy. The Roman as well as the Uniat clergy did not remain indifferent; the revolutionary propaganda reached even the Austrian army. In the first years after the insurrection the chief of the numerous revolutionary organizations was the Carbonari, and after 1835 the leading position was taken by the "Association of

the Polish People" founded by the poet S. Goszczyński. Their activity roused the nation and made the Galician Poles conscious of the spiritual kinship of the Austrian provinces with the rest of Poland. The revolutionaries also pointed out that it was necessary to solve the peasant problem. Their ranks were swelled by patriots from classes which often remained outside active national life, and thus they gained many valuable individuals. A. Dunajewski, the future bishop of Cracow, as well as Francis Smolka and F. Ziemiałkowski, the future founders and leaders of Galician democracy, served their apprenticeship in these revolutionary clubs.

The immediate aim of these secret associations lay not in insurrection, which was a hope kept in the background, but in the awakening of national feeling, and of the consciousness of the importance of the peasant question and the preparation for the struggle for independence. Austria treated membership in them as high treason against the life of the monarchy, and persecution was increased by the unsuccessful expedition of J. Zaliwski, in 1833, to cause an insurrection in the Austrian and Russian provinces and by the renewal in Münchengratz of the alliance of the three partitioning empires, with special clauses directed against the Polish element. The chief persecutor was Baron Krieg von Hochfelden, the actual ruler of the country in the name of the incapable governor, the Archduke Ferdinand d'Este. Krieg was a hard and ruthless bureaucrat, unscrupulous in the choice of implements and methods. Now began an era which recalled the Italian persecutions of which Europe learned with horror from the memoirs of Silvio Pellico. The notorious prisons of Spielberg and Kufstein were filled with political prisoners, who were even starved and whipped. Polish and Ruthenian undergraduates from Sambor, divinity students from the Roman and Greek Catholic seminaries of Lwów were brought to trial. The Ossolineum became a centre for the distribution of revolutionary pamphlets. Austria did her best to paralyse, by class hatred, the influence of the conspirators upon the country population. Amidst an ever-growing demand for independence, and increasing oppression, the year 1846, a year of tragedy for Galicia, was approaching.

#### THE FREE CITY OF CRACOW

The miniature republic of Cracow, the fruit of the discord between the partitioning empires, covered in 1815 an area of scarcely 1000 kilometres, having a population of not quite a hundred thousand. Its

constitution, the work of Adam Czartoryski, guaranteed equality before the law, and the use of the Polish language in schools and in administration. It gave the executive power to a senate and its president, and granted the legislative and controlling functions to a parliament of elected deputies and local dignitaries. The city enjoyed free trade with all lands of the former republic and thus became an important market, attracting foreign traders. The university was rescued from decay and made accessible to the youth of all Poland. The elementary and grammar schools were also reorganized, and literature and science could boast of eminent representatives. Citizens of Silesia, Bohemia, Moravia and Austria migrated to Cracow and were rapidly polonized, and the country squires and magnates from the neighbourhood were also drawn to the city. The local authorities restored and decorated buildings, made new roads and improved the conditions among the peasants on feudal estates by giving them land and transmuting field-service into rent.

But even during its first years the republic showed certain weaknesses. The most dangerous was growing party strife. The struggle for influence and especially the question of the appointment of officials caused a split in the upper classes; between aristocracy and nobility, chiefly former officials of the duchy of Warsaw, and the middle-class and intelligentsia, among whom the university professors took the lead. The leader of the first party, S. Wodzicki, linked up the small disturbances among the undergraduates with the great crisis in the universities which Germany experienced at the time of the notorious "persecution of demagogues", and did not hesitate to turn for help first to Novosiltsov and then to Metternich, thus giving to the tutelary states an opportunity to control the Free City. Thereupon followed the imposition of a highly injurious statute upon the university and the nomination of a warden in the name of Russia. In 1827, when the candidate of the middle-class party was elected President of the Senate, the neighbouring states annulled the election. This was actually the end of the autonomy of Cracow. The November insurrection, in which the citizens played a conspicuous part, resulted in an occupation by the Prussian army, which lasted three months and was marked by much violence and excess. After 1831 Cracow became a centre for the conspiracies that involved Galicia as well as the provinces annexed by Russia. For a time the most important revolutionary organization in the provinces annexed by Austria, "The Association of the Polish People", had its seat in Cracow. The governments of the oppressors answered by restrictions designed to under-

mine the existence of the Free City. In 1833 it lost its autonomy, and power was transferred from the parliament and senate to the Residents of the three neighbouring states. At Teplitz in 1835 the resolution was taken to incorporate the small republic into Austria at a suitable moment. The assassination of the Russian spy, Behrens, in 1836, on the territory of the Free City, gave a pretext for the three armies to march in. They were not withdrawn until 1841. The censorship, the persecutions of the police, managed by Austria, espionage and the torturing of prisoners as well as the decline of the economic prosperity of the Free City, destroyed its autonomy long before the tutelary powers had decided to end it formally.

#### THE PROVINCES ANNEXED BY PRUSSIA

The western part of the duchy of Warsaw granted by the Congress of Vienna to Prussia and constituted as the Grand Duchy of Poznań, covered an area of about 29,000 square kilometres. Its population of about 850,000 grew in the next thirty years to about 1,340,000. It is always difficult to obtain reliable statistics concerning the various nationalities on territories torn by racial strife, where different languages are spoken. The official statement of 1846 shows some 804,000 Poles, 453,000 Germans and 81,000 Jews, who were mostly of German nationality. As in Galicia, the large majority of the population, 83 per cent, were tillers of the soil, but the social structure of its rural economy differed greatly from that of the other provinces of Poland. Large fortunes were rare, and most estates were of medium size. About 50 per cent of the peasants had a permanent right to the soil either as tenants or perpetual lease-holders. The towns were in a ruinous condition; Poznań counted in 1815 only 18,211 inhabitants. The state of industry was desperate owing to its separation from the Congress Kingdom by a customs cordon. The town element consisted almost entirely of Germans who also created here and there, as for instance in the neighbourhood of Bydgoszcz (Bromberg), dense rural settlements. The Jews were occupied with banking, handicraft and commerce.

The people of Poznań surpassed the people of Galicia in national consciousness and political activity, for they had lived through the period of the Great Parliament and the Duchy of Warsaw, as well as through two risings against Prussia, in 1794 and 1804-7, in which the peasantry, stirred up by the clergy, especially by the monks, expressed

its patriotism as strongly as the nobility. This decided Prussia, after recovering at the Congress of Vienna a part of its former possessions, to apply a new method of government. The manifesto of Frederick William III of 15 May 1815, guaranteeing to the Poles the integrity of their national status, the maintenance of the Catholic religion and equal rights to the Polish and German languages, contained the following words: "And you have a fatherland . . . You will be incorporated into my monarchy without being required to give up your nationality. You will have a share in the constitution which I intend to give to my faithful subjects, and you will receive, as will all other provinces of my country, a provincial status." Beneath these assurances was hidden the idea of a pact of the Polish people with the Hohenzollern State, which was at that time not fully understood by the masses. On the one side it promised a cessation of germanizing efforts and a certain number of privileges to the Poles, on the other the effacing of the tradition of the two risings against Prussia and the acknowledgement as their fatherland of the Prussian share only of the former Republic.

In accordance with this assumption, a separate coat of arms was given to the province of Poznań, displaying the Prussian eagle with the white eagle on its breast. The chief authorities obtained the right to use their own seal of office and to mint small coin. The King of Prussia took the title of Grand Duke of Poznań and there was even a project to create, in obvious competition with the Congress Kingdom, a separate military force. The distinctive position of the Grand Duchy as compared with all other provinces of the monarchy was particularly stressed by the appointment of a governor (a functionary elsewhere unknown), who was to play the part of political mediator between the ruler and his new subjects. This position, which required much tact and at the same time firmness and personal initiative, was offered to Prince A. Radziwiłł, husband of a royal princess, who had tried to induce his compatriots to side with Prussia against Napoleon. This great nobleman, known for his generous support of cultural and charitable institutions, had the best intentions, but his innate timidity, and the resistance of the local Prussian bureaucracy weakened his influence. It was of far greater importance that Zerboni di Sposetti was governor-general of the province. Sposetti was a Liberal and a Freemason, known for his violent struggle against Hoym, the dishonest governor of the Polish lands at the Second Partition. He was one of the officials of Hardenberg, the chief advocate of a conciliatory policy with regard to the Poles. At that time the Polish element gained

access to the judiciary and the local government of the districts, the magistrates of which, the *landrats*, selected by the King from three candidates presented by the provincial assembly, were generally Polish country squires. Polish was obligatory in elementary and grammar schools, and mild attempts at germanization were immediately stopped by Altenstein, the Minister of Education, who explained that to engraft foreign speech artificially "would have been an altogether perverse method with regard to an individual, but would be even more so with regard to a nation, even if it had not possessed such a rich, individually developed and finished language as the Poles".

But the government action in the social and economic sphere produced the most important results. In 1821 the Land Credit Society was founded, which enabled the Polish landed gentry not only to weather a bad agricultural period, but also served their economic self-defence during the later era of germanization, when the Polish element was ousted from all important posts. In 1823 began the great work of the enfranchisement of the peasantry. Although Prussia, like Austria and Russia, was actuated by the hope of using the peasant class as a bulwark against the revolutionary clergy and gentry, the attempt to strengthen the rural element turned to the advantage of Polish nationalism. Only such holdings were enfranchised as could guarantee their owner an independent existence. The indemnity to the proprietor of the village was not achieved by way of a compulsory cession of part of the peasant's land, as in other provinces of Prussia, but mostly by way of rent, tribute in corn or labour. Rights of way were fixed and holdings consolidated at the same time, and the whole difficult and complicated operation was spread over a number of years. This produced a strong, well-organized Polish peasantry, which, after a phase of passing gratitude to the government, became the strongest supporter of Polish nationalism, and gave the economic life of Poznań a more permanent foundation than existed in the other parts of Poland. The economically weaker rural elements which were not enfranchised soon got rid of their land and moved to towns, thus strengthening their Polish character, or remained in the country as landless residents, cottagers and farm-labourers.

This experiment in Polish-Prussian reconciliation did not stand the test of time. The Prussian government did not give up the intention of gradually establishing the predominance of German culture over Poland. Even Sposetti confessed in a confidential letter that "the maintenance of Polish nationality in the Grand Duchy could never be

intended by the Prussian government, which ought to work only towards its cautious extinction". In fact the old anti-nationalist tricks began to appear under the ostensibly tolerant liberalism, as the reactionary element round Frederick William II had got the upper hand over the supporters of Hardenberg. At the same time the fear of Alexander's restoration policy was dying out. In 1825 Zerboni was succeeded by Baumann, a Prussian bureaucrat of the old type. Now began the closing of Polish and the opening of German schools, the introduction of German in teaching most subjects, with the creation of German parallel classes. A similar course was followed in administration and jurisdiction.

The policy applied at the same time in the other eastern provinces of the monarchy still more emphatically stresses the real intentions of the government with regard to everything Polish. The most important member of the administration of West Prussia from 1816 and East Prussia from 1824 was Theodor Schon, who was to cause the most irreparable losses to the Poles on the Baltic. A vigorous administrator with a wide outlook, he brilliantly combined liberalism with a vehement tendency towards denationalization. He said it was his aim "to make out of Slavs and slaves Germans and human beings". From the heavy taxes on West Prussian Poles, he built several hundred purely German elementary schools. He gave government grants exclusively to German landowners, while Polish estates were sold at auction. The enfranchisement of peasants was carried through in a way highly injurious to Poles. He abolished the Polish language in jurisdiction and administration and ruthlessly persecuted the Catholic Church.

To Danzig, a city of distinctly anti-Prussian disposition, ruined by the continuous blockade and the siege of 1813, he gave help. He reconstituted the corn market, restored the ruined edifices and thus prepared the transformation of the pro-Polish commercial emporium into a Prussian city of officials. His restoration of the castle of the Teutonic Knights at Marienburg was symbolic. Likewise the governor-general of Prussian Silesia, Merckel, applied rigorous germanizing measures in the schools and administration to almost 1,500,000 Poles. By carrying through the act of enfranchisement in favour of the powerful noble families, he ruined the great mass of the Polish people. Poor, with little national consciousness, suffering from frequent industrial depressions and epidemics due to malnutrition, forced down to the position of an agricultural and factory proletariat, they were in danger of losing religion and nationality, through the



whose memoirs were to be a source of abundant inspiration to Bismarck.

Against this systematically planned offensive, the Polish nation spontaneously took to self-defence. Several eminent men proved that a Pole under foreign rule may be capable not merely of plots and insurrections, but also of rebuilding national life from its foundations. The most prominent among the landed gentry of Great Poland was General D. Chłapowski, a soldier of Napoleon, and of the November insurrection. He set the gentry a model of enlightened management grounded on English standards; through the introduction of rotation of crops, dairy farming, sheep-breeding, the cultivation of sugar beet and brewing he raised immeasurably the productiveness of the land. He educated the gentry and helped them to tide over the difficult period of peasant enfranchisement and of Flottwell's persecutions. What Chłapowski did for the gentry was done still more widely by K. Marcinkowski for the towns. This eminent physician and philanthropist, a first-rate organizer and indefatigable propagator of ideas, strove above all to create a Polish middle-class, which in time wrested industry, commerce and the professions from the hands of Germans and Jews. Two institutions owe to Marcinkowski their rise and development: "The Society for Help in Studies", which educated a legion of clergymen, physicians, lawyers and engineers, and the "Polish Bazaar" in Poznań, which became a centre not only of Polish industry and commerce, but also of social life. Another eminent Pole, the generous Maecenas E. Raczyński, promoted the development of literary culture. He founded the first great public library in Poznań and edited several hundred volumes relating to Polish history and literature. T. Działyński, the restorer of the castle and founder of the library in Kurnik, competed with him in this field. Before 1830, fresh incentives were drawn from the Congress Kingdom, where many of the Poznań youth attended the grammar schools. Books and periodicals from Warsaw were universally read, as the independent output of the Poznań province was small. In this regard the November insurrection caused great changes, similar to those in Galicia, but Flottwell, in spite of the definiteness of his anti-Polish policy, left open much wider opportunities for cultural effort than Krieg. In 1834 there began at Leszno the publication of *The Friend of the People*, which influenced all the Polish provinces under Russian rule, and in 1838 that of the most important periodical in the Polish territories, *The Literary Weekly*. All over the country societies were formed, which, under such innocent names as "The Amusement Club", worked for the promotion of culture and edu-

cation, organizing libraries, arranging archaeological studies, collecting art-treasures, spreading the knowledge of history and native literature.

The conditions under which they worked changed for the better when Frederick William IV ascended the throne. The new sovereign, the personal friend of members of the Poznań aristocracy, especially the Radziwiłls, and a foe to persecution, not only recalled Flottwell, but modified his germanizing system, patched up the quarrel with Archbishop Dunin, put an end to the oppression of the landed gentry, and by decrees secured the rights of the Polish language. This radical change of Flottwell's system alarmed the two other partitioning governments. But they soon satisfied themselves that Prussia had changed only her method, not her fundamental aim. Frederick William IV, enamoured of the hierarchy of caste, was willing to restore to the Polish gentry the right of election of *landrats*, if only they would declare themselves to be an organic part of the Hohenzollern monarchy. The new and hospitable governor-general of Poznań, Count Arnim-Boitzenburg, was too deeply convinced of the final victory of German culture over Polish barbarism to hasten it by irritating means. In 1843 the provincial parliament, by demonstrating the impossibility of a Polish-Prussian compromise, put an end to the era of concessions. Nevertheless the intellectual and political life of Poznań developed more and more brilliantly. The books on history, philosophy and classical literature written there at that time are among the lasting achievements of Polish authorship. The system of elementary schools, greatly extended by the Prussian administration, thanks to the new King, came under the supervision of the Catholic clergy and was changed from an intended instrument of germanization into an important factor not only for awakening the national consciousness of the Polish masses, but also for conquering the German Catholic public for Polish nationalism. The growing wealth, education, and expansion of the Polish element meant that ever wider circles participated in the life of the nation. Towns were becoming polonized, the artisan class was growing, the patriots were planning to transfer their propaganda to the peasantry. When the Congress Kingdom was declining under the iron rule of Paskevitch, when every expression of Polish life in Galicia was spied upon and suppressed, and the Free City of Cracow was in its death agony, the Poznań provinces, together with the Emigration in France, became the main centre of national energy and thought. No wonder that it gave the impulse to a new revolutionary scheme which aimed at a simultaneous uprising of all three parts of Poland in another armed struggle for independence.

pressure of the state, the great agrarians and industrialists, and the numerous German associations, especially Gustav-Adolf societies. Yet, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Polish element of both provinces showed not only defensive strength, but also powerful expansion. An important factor in the history of Pomerania was the awakening of national consciousness among the Kashubes. Their greatest writer, K. Mrongovius, who settled in Danzig, stressed the identity of the Kashubes with the Poles. The Mazurians of East Prussia also brought forth an ardent defender of the rights of the Polish language in the Protestant minister Gustav Gizevius. Moreover the beginnings of a cultural and national revival may be observed among the Poles of Upper Silesia. Among them appeared J. Lompa, the true father of Polish literature in Upper Silesia.

While the Prussian government thus indicated that the obligations towards Polish nationality, forced upon it by the Congress of Vienna, were regarded as a temporary burden, the Poles of Western Poland were far from limiting their aspirations to the Poznań province. The psychology of the citizen of Western or Great Poland differed greatly from that imposed upon him later by the necessity of systematic economic struggle with the Prussian invasion. An inflammable and revolutionary element bore with impatience the state of affairs created by the Congress of Vienna. The Poznań community had close sympathy with the Congress Kingdom, despite the arbitrary laws and frontiers of 1815. The former soldiers of Napoleon and the younger generation created the first secret societies. These were patronized by general H. Dąbrowski, from his estate in Winnogóra. After his death in 1818 the secret "Society of Scythemen" formed in Poznań a branch of the conspiring "National Freemasonry" of Warsaw. Young men of Poznań who were students in Breslau and Berlin organized branches of the Warsaw academic societies. The legal opposition obtained a tribune of its own when the provincial parliament was called to life in 1827. Besides four magnates, it contained elected representatives of the knighthood, and representatives of the towns and villages. Endowed with wider powers than the sham parliament in Galicia, it showed from the first political activity, especially defending the rights of the Polish language in the schools and in administration. The funeral of the popular archbishop of Gniezno and Poznań, T. Włóckci, afforded opportunity for a great manifestation of national feelings and dislike of Prussia. At that time radiating centres of patriotism were provided by the grammar schools, which influenced even German youth. In such a state of mind the population enthusiastically wel-

comed the outbreak of the November insurrection. In spite of the reluctant attitude of the dictator Chłopicki it was joined by volunteers in crowds. Beside the students, and the gentry with their dependants and domestics, marched artisans, many of German descent, and peasants, egged on by the clergy. Contingents of Poznań cavalry participated in all the more important engagements. The excitement frequently caused outbreaks against the Prussian bureaucracy and the immigrant settlers. The reports of the authorities state that only a considerable military force on the frontier prevented more serious disturbances, and in the event of an invasion of the insurrectionary army, the countryside would certainly have taken up arms.

The failure of the insurrection inaugurated a new era in Poznań. Once more the impossibility of a reconciliation between the Prussian state ideals and the Polish claims for independence became apparent. Field-Marshal Gneisenau, who commanded the Prussian army there, stated that the Polish provinces were vital to Prussia. His Chief of Staff, the famous Clausewitz, wrote that for Prussia a more natural enemy than a resurrected Poland did not exist. Somewhat later, similar conclusions were drawn by Moltke in his juvenile work on Poland, and by the historian Stenzel, a representative of the "Borussian" school. This opinion gained powerful adherents in the highest circles and caused a change in the government. The advocate of Polish-Prussian agreement, Anton Radziwiłł, withdrew from the position of governor. The management of the country was transferred to two men whose activity marks a further stage in the development of the anti-Polish policy from Frederick the Great to Bismarck and the modern Prussian extremists. The new governor-general, E. Flottwell, an able and energetic pupil of Schon, introduced the methods tried out in Pomerania. He took his stand against the Catholic clergy as a polonizing and rebellious element, and quarrelled fiercely with Archbishop Dunin about mixed marriages. Flottwell suppressed the monasteries. From their confiscated estates arose the school-fund, administered by the state. To educate a pro-government clergy he founded two theological institutions and filled the teaching posts in the existing seminaries with his own men. He deprived the gentry of their former political position, abolishing the eligibility of the *landrats* as well as the autonomous office of bailiff. To combat revolution, he also promoted partial equality of rights to the Jews, developed the finances, industries and roads, made agricultural improvements and founded schools and charitable institutions. His colleague and ardent supporter was the commander of the Poznań army-corps, General Grolmann,

## THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS OF 1846-1848

Poznań, which in the 'forties had the most favourable conditions for national life, was able to consolidate its political groupings and programmes earlier than the other provinces. The ultramontane clericalism which developed at that time in Great Poland, found its organ in the *Poznań Review*, edited by J. and S. Koźmian from 1845. The moderate landowners, who objected to an early insurrection, and laid stress mainly upon social work, were led by Marcinkowski and General Chłapowski. The former acted first as an agent for the "Hotel Lambert", but was later independent and an enemy of plots and insurrections. But the small gentry, the tenant-farmers, the intelligentsia and the youth gathered round the democratic and revolutionary banner. In this camp the leading personality was K. Libelt, who with his disinterestedness, his gift for ardent propaganda, his summons to generosity and sacrifice recalled Mazzini. Together with the historian J. Moraczewski, he began in 1843 to edit *The Year*, an important organ for propagating the democratic theory. On the left of Libelt and Moraczewski a more violent element urged an immediate outbreak of the revolution. When the agreement between Prussia and Russia regarding the exchange of political prisoners was not renewed, this movement was strengthened and a number of radicals, already compromised by taking part in plots against the Tsar, managed to get into Prussian territory. Two new-comers from the Congress Kingdom exercised a conspicuous influence. H. Kamieński in his popular pamphlets disseminated the idea of an immediate uprising of all Poland, maintaining that the people armed could defeat regular troops. E. Dembowski, an extreme Radical of aristocratic descent, gained almost legendary fame as an agitator. On the left the "Association of Plebeians", under the ambitious bookseller W. Stefański, attracted the artisans of Poznań.

The exuberance of Poznań caused a clash with the Emigration, which had tried to impose its own methods. The local democratic camp, under the pressure of the new-comers from the Congress Kingdom and of the "Plebeians", began to rage against the dilatoriness of the emigrant politicians. Fearing to lose its influence, the "Centralization" decided to submit. In the spring of 1845 L. Mierosławski, the appointed leader of the expected insurrection, came for the first time to Poznań. He was then known in emigration circles as a military and political writer. In his character we find all the

elements of future success and failure: a broad outlook, an ardent temperament, a great gift of speech, power to influence the masses, especially the youth, but a lack of balance and of ability for a realistic analysis of his plans, an exuberant sense of his own worth, and a quarrelsomeness and sarcasm, which in time alienated from him his most faithful adherents. Mierosławski's scheme comprised a general national uprising. Counting upon the declaration of the country population for the insurrection, upon the friendliness of Prussian liberals and the anti-Russian attitude of the Berlin government, and on the disablement of Austria by the revolt of the Hungarians and Czechs, he hoped swiftly to organize a regular army. A series of blows descended upon the conspiracy before time had fully proved the unreality of these calculations. Towards the end of 1845 the Prussian police imprisoned Stefański with a number of his adherents, and in February 1846 Mierosławski, Libelt and the staff of the conspirators were arrested owing to the treachery of one of them. The great preparations of the Prussian provinces ended in an attempt to conquer the Poznań citadel and in the unsuccessful attack upon Starogard.

In the Austrian provinces, the development took a far more dramatic turn. The imperial authorities, long alarmed by the rumours of an impending outbreak, decided to counter it by incitement of the ignorant, fanatical peasant mass, which had for some time past been worked up against the gentry and the revolutionaries. In February, 1846, crowds of peasants attacked the mansions, burned property, murdered the owners, frequently with terrible tortures, and conveyed numbers of bound revolutionaries to the police stations. Evidence irrefutably affirms that in all this the Austrian bureaucracy played an important part. It not only incited the peasant to murder and plunder, but also repeatedly pressed the weapons into his hands, personally conducted the action and gave abundant rewards for dead men and captives. The main executioners of 1846 were Krieg, the governor-general of Galicia, Berndt, the sheriff of Bochnia, Breinl von Wallerstern, the sheriff of Tarnów, and J. Szela, the peasant leader of the massacre in the Tarnów district. Western Galicia was soaked with the blood of 2000 victims. In the municipalities of Choczołów and Witów in the Tatra district, however, the highland population, schooled for many years in patriotism, joined the insurrection. Still more vividly reflected from the dark background was the Free City of Cracow, where the country population, freed from serfdom and field labour, actively supported the national movement. On 22 February, a national government was formed there, and on the 24th the dictator-

ship of the little-known lawyer J. Tyssowski was proclaimed, at whose side the actual leadership was held by Dembowski. The Republic of Cracow, which lasted only ten days, gained a great renown in Western Europe by its extreme radicalism. "Everybody could make use of land property according to his merits and abilities", the government announced. Landlords were ordered on pain of death to abolish field-service and rents; to artisans the creation of national workshops was promised; municipal elections were announced on the basis of universal suffrage; attempts were made to introduce practices from the time of the French Revolution, seasoning them freely with Polish religious and patriotic ideas. But the necessary force was lacking. A small formation sent against the Austrians and peasant gangs was destroyed near Gdów. Dembowski, moving at the head of a procession, which was intended to calm the enraged crowds, fell near Cracow from an Austrian bullet. On 3 March, the Russians occupied the Free City.

The unsuccessful insurrection of 1846 had a fateful influence upon the Polish national life. In Poznań the authorities returned to the harshest methods of Flottwell, dissolving Polish societies, closing down periodicals, germanizing schools, buying up Polish land and promoting German colonization. Numerous arrests and the deportation of foreign elements were to smother the embers of the revolution. Under the influence of events in Galicia, Metternich formed a plan of dividing the country into Western and Eastern, and proposed to use the Ruthenians against the Poles, to support energetically German colonization and schools and to strengthen the German character of towns. Count R. Stadion was sent from Vienna to enfranchise the peasants. But his mission came to nothing and his brother Francis, governor of Galicia and soon to be a well-known statesman, studied local conditions and represented the effects of Austrian administration to the government in the darkest colours, demanding a thorough change of system. The Free City was incorporated into the monarchy in November 1846, in spite of the obstinate resistance of Prussia, which had derived from it considerable profits.

The Polish nation, influenced by hatred of both Germanic countries, was expressing pan-Slavic sympathies. A. Wielopolski, in his famous "Letter of a Polish nobleman to Count Metternich", put his nation under the protection of Nicholas I as "the most generous of our enemies". T. Działyński begged the Russian ambassador in Berlin, Meyendorff, to save Slavonic Poland from extermination by Austria and Prussia. But at the same time the attitude of the peasant with regard to the events in Galicia, and his small part in the planned

Poznań insurrection, caused the more prudent of the landed gentry to watch the relation of the manor to the village. In Galicia two eminent Poles, A. Goluchowski and M. Krainiński, members of Stadion's commission for peasant reform, made proposals to end the existing quarrel to the satisfaction of both parties. In Poznań the gentry and the clergy set about energetic work in the village; the rest was achieved by the brutal chicanery and inquisitions of the Prussian authorities, which raised among the peasant-masses a ferment against the alien government. But the most important factor of Polish propaganda in the Prussian provinces was the prosecution of the participants in the insurrection. Mierosławski, who broke down during the investigation and disclosed the plan of the conspiracy, regained his self-control in court and deeply moved the Berlin audience and wide Polish circles by his splendid speeches. The verdict of 2 December 1847 sentenced the leader and seven of his associates to death, while many others were imprisoned. But before the Prussian government had decided to stain itself in the eyes of all Europe with the blood of Polish warriors fighting for their freedom, the March revolution gave an entirely new turn to the Polish question in Prussia and Austria.

The 'thirties and 'forties, which, except for the early days of Frederick William IV, are notorious in the history of Prussian Poland, were a period of great sympathy among the German nation with the Polish struggles for independence. When during the November insurrection Prussia supported Russia with all her strength, public opinion in Germany was not less conspicuously in favour of Poland. Poles emigrating to Western Europe found in Germany, especially in the south and west, a friendly reception and generous support. The leaders of South German liberalism were especially distinguished for their sympathy with the Polish nation: Welcker, Rotteck, Gervinus, Wirth, the leader of the Rhineland democrats, the historian Spazier. In Berlin Father Raumer thus incurred government displeasure and Wilhelm Willisen caused the personal anger of Nicholas and the intervention of his ambassador by giving an account of the Poles' military activities in the official *Militärisches Wochenblatt*. At the same time the *Deutsche Polenlieder* were written. In German journalism there resounded frequently the call for the restoration of Poland, even from such nationalists as E. M. Arndt, who at heart was unfriendly towards the Polish nation. Nicholas' dislike of a reform of the German states, especially Prussia, on a constitutional basis, and his opposition towards a united Germany instead of the existing federation, was universally



known. Against the background of this antagonism between the liberals' ideals of German unity and the conservatism of Russia, Poland appeared as a potential ally in the fight against the East and afterwards as a buffer state separating the new Germany from the land of the Tsar.

This explains the development of Polish-German relations after the March revolution. Under the pressure of the masses Frederick William IV saw himself compelled to transform Prussia into a constitutional state and to take up the question of the unification of Germany. It was generally expected that Nicholas would answer by armed intervention. The Berlin crowds released Mierosławski and his compatriots from the Moabit prison, and carried them triumphantly through the streets, as the vanguard of the struggle against Russia. The minister of Nassau, Max von Gagern, urged the King to liberate his Polish provinces to gain an ally against the Czar. The newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron H. Arnim, a liberal monarchist, ambitious to unite Germany under the auspices of Prussia, tried to put these ideas into practice. Thanks mainly to him, the idea of granting independence to the Grand Duchy, as a basis of military operations against Russia, got the upper hand. A royal decree announced a "national re-organization" of Poznań. Its first stages were to be the withdrawal of the Prussian army, the polonization of the schools and of the administration, and the creation of a Polish military force. These propositions were regarded as a declaration of war on Russia. The change of régime in Poznań was accomplished without bloodshed and almost in a legal way. The military and civil authorities, left without orders, and caught in the rapid march of events, permitted the formation of a Polish National Committee, composed of representatives of the moderate landed gentry, the clergy and the radical elements.

The commissaries sent out into the provincial districts had no difficulty in depriving the bewildered Prussian officials of their authority in a number of Polish localities. As a rule, the state emblems were removed and the funds confiscated. A re-organizing commission, established in Poznań under the leadership of Beurmann, the governor-general of the province, was to occupy itself with bringing to reality the proposals in the King's manifesto. The emigrants, conveyed free of charge by the railways of the confederate states, returned into the country in crowds. Here and there Prussian officers drilled small Polish military formations. At first the German population of Poznań, enthusiastic about the prospect of war against the common enemy,

exchanged national cockades with the Poles and was ready to acknowledge the separation of the Grand Duchy from Prussia. But despite these promising beginnings the forebodings of future complications began to appear. There was no clear idea in the Polish camp as to the question against whom the insurrectionary movement was directed. Mirosławski, who was triumphantly welcomed in Poznań, took the chief command, and returned to the plan of 1846, of a regular war of Prussian and Austrian Poland against Russia with the support of Prussia. A similar aim was expressed by the Hotel Lambert, the leading spirit of which, Adam Czartoryski, having arrived in Berlin, entered into negotiation with the Prussian government and tried to force upon the Poznań insurrection a leader of his own choice. The wealthy landed gentry of Great Poland began to substitute for the original aim, an independent and united Poland, that of the national autonomy of Poznań. On the other hand the town and village masses committed outrages against German officials and colonists which were, however, soon checked by the National Committee.

At the same time a change in the attitude of the German community towards the Poles became apparent. The demonstrations of fraternity with the Poles and the generous concessions made to them during the first days of the Revolution had been the result of the fear of a Russian invasion. Indeed Nicholas, hearing of the disturbances in Prussia, was preparing for armed intervention. A different plan was formed by Chancellor Nesselrode and the Berlin ambassador Meyendorff, his most trusted advisers on German questions. They realized that a war against Germany would strengthen her union with the Poles and would make the Polish question a European problem. If Germany was left in peace, the alliance between the nations would loosen and with time an inevitable quarrel would rise between them. Following these suggestions Nicholas changed his original plans. Russia became passive. Seeing no danger of invasion, the German nation began to cool in its enthusiasm for Poland. From the prospective ally the Poles changed again into the age-old enemy, who wanted to separate Prussia from its border-provinces. Already the *Vorparlament* in Frankfurt, which had made itself famous by the resolution stressing the necessity of Poland's restoration as a "holy duty of the German nation", had become the stage for fierce attacks against the aggressiveness of the Poles, checked only by fear of Russia.

This change of atmosphere was much more strongly felt in Poznań. Years before the "Springtime of Nations", the relationship of the two nationalities had become strained. The creation of a revolutionary

Polish organization and the royal decree of March, separating the Grand Duchy from Prussia, caused a violent reaction especially in localities thickly populated by Germans, such as Bydgoszcz (Bromberg), Międzyrzecz and the district on the river Noteć. The German population armed itself and protested to Berlin. This movement was actively supported by the anti-Polish bureaucracy. Almost the entire Jewish population declared itself on the side of the Germans. The situation was aggravated by the question of Pomerania, which in the conception of Polish politicians was to be a constituent part of the future Poland. The idea of an eastern enemy reaching to the mouth of the Vistula, with Danzig, excited to the depths even South Germany, which was friendly towards Poland. Such a tried partisan of Poland as Gervinus made his *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* a tribune of militant nationalism. There were more and more frequent encounters in the Grand Duchy, often with bloodshed. The Prussian Colonel Brandt, who rapidly defeated the Polish movement, admitted in his memoirs that "unfairness was mostly on the side of our people, who were gradually overcome by a certain exasperation". At the same time the plans for a restoration of Poland broke down on the stage of European politics. Among the states from which Arnim looked for support for his cause, Austria answered with a refusal and the leaders of the English and French policy, Palmerston and Lamartine, displayed their sympathy for Russia. Through their diplomats in Berlin, Stratford Canning, who was there temporarily, and Circowyt, they contributed to the strengthening of tendencies hostile to the restoration of Poland.

The last attempt to avoid a Polish-German conflict was the mission of General Willisen, the royal commissioner to Poznań. He was one of the most tried friends of Poland, inspired with hatred of Russia by his liberal convictions and his pan-German patriotism. Having arrived in Berlin on 5 April, he faced the exceedingly delicate task of preventing bloodshed and calming the Poles by purely administrative concessions, demanding from them in return the disbanding of their military forces. The difficulty of his position between two enraged nations was intensified by the double-faced Prussian policy. While the Liberal ministry acted in a conciliatory spirit, the King and his reactionary camarilla secretly encouraged General Colomba, who was in command of Poznań, to an armed suppression of the Polish movement. Faced by a catastrophe, Willisen concluded on 11 April a treaty with the representatives of the Polish committee in Jarosławiec. Going beyond his powers, he secured for Poznań not only a separate administration and the nomination of Poles to the highest civil offices,

but also a separate military division composed entirely of recruits from the Poznań district. In return the committee promised to dismiss the Polish military force, about 3000 volunteers, concentrated in four camps. This attempt at a compromise raised a storm in both parties. Crowds of "Scythemen" in Polish camps declared that the treaty of Jarosławiec was a betrayal; the German population, incited by the bureaucracy, abused Willisen as a deceiver, who had only legalized the existence of the insurrectionary army corps and prepared the separation of the Grand Duchy from Prussia. The Berlin government ratified the Jarosławiec agreement by a decree on 14 April and announced a national reorganization of the Duchy, but at the same time acknowledged the principle of the division of the country into a Polish and a German part. The second decree (26 April) incorporated the main portion of the Poznań province, together with the capital, in the German part. After the departure of Willisen, whom the local authorities prevented from realizing the government's instructions, the helm was finally seized by the military faction, which had long desired to settle matters with the adversary.

In an atmosphere of intensified passion on both sides, with Russian anti-Polish propaganda spreading all over Germany, the destruction of the Polish military corps was brought about. On 29 April, Brandt attacked the camp in Książ with a force four times as strong. He massacred the Polish garrison and left the town to fire and plunder. The deplorable situation of the Poles was not alleviated when Mierosławski and the main forces defeated Blumen on 30 April, near Miłosław and repulsed General Hirschfeld on 2 May, near Września.

Besides the eightfold superiority of the adversary, the moral failure of the Poznań landed gentry, who were leaving the ranks in crowds, had fatal consequences. The peasant with a scythe fought heroically, but without training, arms or leaders, he could not long resist a regular army. In this atmosphere of depression in the country and intrigues and treachery in the camp the remnant of the insurrectionary force capitulated on 9 May. The government of the country was entrusted to a Royal Commissioner, Général Pfuel. He imprisoned the insurgents, even ordering some to be branded with lunar caustic. Armed German partisan bands tolerated the persecution of the defenceless population by the army, divided the country so that only a scrap of it with a population of 300,000 formed the Duchy of Gniezno, and the rest was to be incorporated into Prussia. Drastic extermination of everything Polish was to take place in the part annexed by Prussia, while the separated part was to be absorbed by Russia. The

parliament summoned to Frankfort conducted its debates in an altogether different atmosphere from that of its predecessor, which had demanded the reconstruction of Poland. The arguments of Blum and Ruge, the defenders of the suppressed nation, were outweighed by Wilhelm Jordan's proclamation of the principle of a "healthy national egoism" as the German attitude with regard to the Poles. On 27 July, Pfuel's demarcation was ratified by the majority. Yet in the Prussian parliament the proposal for the partition of Poznań was rejected owing to the intervention of the new French ambassador E. Arago. The immediate danger of the destruction of one of the centres of Polish life was thus warded off.

The failure of the insurrection in Poznań and the decline of the revolution in Prussia and Germany meant that from the second half of 1848 another province became the centre of the Polish movement for independence, and at the period of the "Springtime of Nations" it burst forth there with elemental power. In Galicia events were at first similar to those in Poznań. The bewildered bureaucracy let the helm slip from its hands, permitting the creation of National committees in Cracow and Lwów with the participation of the emigrants, the arming of guards, academic formations and the freedom of the press. A deputation to Vienna put forward a programme of co-operation with the Habsburg monarchy to reconstruct Poland as a "bulwark of Europe against the slavery and ignorance forcing their way into it". The central department of the Austrian Home Office favoured the return of Galicia to the future Poland, and the Liberal Archduke John said to the Galician deputation: "In dividing Poland my Grandmother and King Frederick committed a great sin. This partition is the heaviest misfortune for Europe. This misfortune will last until Poland regains its independent existence."

Yet the proposal to raise up Poland with the support of Austria had from the first much less chance of success than the alliance with Prussia. No party at Vienna resembled Arnim's group. Metternich's successor, old Figuelmont, believed in friendly relations with Russia, as an ally against revolution. Also later governments of a Liberal tinge had neither desire nor power to fulfil the Polish demands, even within the more modest compass of provincial needs. Having prevented the projected resolution of the Galician gentry for the abolition of field-service, the government enfranchised the peasants on 17 April, by an imperial decree, the whole indemnity to be paid from public funds. Another traditional measure of Austrian policy was the inciting of the Ruthenians against the Poles. Governor Stadion, hurt by the charges

of the Polish deputation, gathered the Ruthenian clergy under his protection. These were so servile that besides continually denouncing the Poles and demanding a division of the country into a "Mazurian" and an Eastern part, with the addition of the Northern Hungarian Komitats, they offered to form a Ruthenian voluntary legion for the suppression of the revolution. Finally the commander of the Cracow garrison, General Castiglione, taking advantage of a quarrel with the population, bombarded the city on 26 April, and put an end to the political life of the former capital.

Polish activity was transferred to the eastern part of the country. There the National Council brought the moderate elements together and the emissaries of the democratic society were hard at work. Among them was V. Heltman; while General Bem proposed to arm the gentry and the town population, to organize an army-corps in Hungary, and to rise in conjunction with the Vienna and Magyar revolutionists. The Austrian commander in Lwów, General Hammerstein, a trusty member of the military camarilla under Field-Marshal Radetzky, Prince Windischgrätz and Banus Jellačić, was also preparing a decisive stroke against the Poles. Between these two extremes W. Zaleski, who succeeded Stadion as governor, and was the first Pole to hold this position, tried in vain to maintain peaceful relations for the country's good. Able, industrious and well-meaning, he was not ruthless or resolute enough for the circumstances. In the first days of November, Hammerstein bombarded Lwów, introduced martial law into the country, suppressed newspapers and societies and set about the expulsion of émigrés. The central government completed his work, recalling Zaleski, and effecting, as the Ruthenians wished, partition into a Western and an Eastern province. As in Prussian Poland, the Polish party of independence lost all opportunities for public activity, the conspiracy went into the catacombs, and the alliance with revolutionary Hungary became its sole support.

The dispute which broke out in 1848 between the Hungarians and the Slavic peoples who were awakening into political independence put the Poles, who longed to unite Slavs and Magyars in the struggle against Russia, into an exceedingly difficult position. At the Slavonic Congress in Prague the Poles took great pains to reconcile the parties at variance and strove for the re-organization of the Habsburg monarchy according to the needs of its Slavonic nations, as well as for the reconstruction of Poland. When these efforts failed and the definite break between Hungary and the dynasty and the Slavonic elements supporting it became an accomplished fact, Polish opinion also became

divided. Cracow conservatives joined with the Czechs in loyalty to the monarchy, which they longed to transform into a federation of Slavonic nations. The most eminent leader of the Galician democracy, F. Smolka, whom the revolution of 1848 had found a prisoner of state and had made President of the Austrian parliament, opposed "Austro-Slavonism" and favoured a separation of the Italian provinces from Austria, a constitution of her own for Hungary and the bestowing of the imperial crown of Germany on the Habsburgs. Galicia, herself united to Austria, was to be the crystallizing centre of a future Poland. The democratic element agreed with the Hotel Lambert on the policy of active support of the Hungarians. The democrats under General J. Wysocki, later the leader of the Polish legion, took an active part in the Hungarian revolution, as did the heroes of the year 1831, H. Dembiński and J. Bem. The former held for a time the Hungarian chief command, the latter won almost legendary fame as the defender of Transylvania against both Austria and Russia. Both developed at the same time an intense political activity, aiming at the closer co-operation of Hungarians with Slavs and Rumanians. The diplomacy of Prince A. Czartoryski was directed along the same lines in Serbia and in Italy. Owing to the influence of the Hotel Lambert the chief command over the army of Piedmont was for a short time held by the Polish general W. Chrzanowski.

Polish problems were managed differently by the leaders of the democratic camp who, having been deceived by the moderate liberals, placed their hopes in the extremists. Emissaries of the "centralization" shared in the Dresden and Baden-Palatinate insurrections. Many Polish officers served in the ranks, and at the head of the insurrectionary army stood Mirosławski, as formerly in Sicily against the Bourbons. Despite sharp clashes with the Hotel Lambert during the first months of the revolution, Mickiewicz formed a "legion" of his own, instructed it in extreme radical and republican ideology, and set it against Austria. Later its remnants took part in the defence of the Roman republic. All these efforts came to nothing because of the weakness of the insurgents against the regular armies. But the main obstacle was the irreconcilable attitude of Kossuth, who looked on the Poles as an energetic element ready to fight to the last in contrast to the temperate and easily pacified Magyars, but at the same time rejected all advice and paralysed all Polish efforts to reconcile the nationalities within the Hungarian lands. The capitulation of Villagos on 13 August 1849 put an end to Hungarian hopes and at the same time closed the epoch of the "Springtime of Nations", during which

the Polish question was an international problem and Polish patriots influenced European problems.

The crisis of 1848 made a great difference in the life of Austrian and Prussian Poland. The reforms which Austria was compelled to introduce changed the structure of Polish society in Galicia. The division into classes, the social distinction between estates, differentiation of taxes and courts of law disappeared; all classes were equalized before the law and began to coalesce into a uniform nation. There only remained the difference in wealth, profession and the conditions of living. The peasant was transformed from a serf into a free owner of land. These great changes were completed in circumstances unfavourable to the Poles. The way in which the peasant reform was introduced and effected exposed the country to a lasting economic crisis and strengthened social hatred. The growing national feeling of the Ruthenians acquired a strong anti-Polish bias from the patronage of the bureaucracy and founded the relationship of the two nationalities upon an irreconcilable antagonism. The victorious soldiery ruled the country and aimed at the complete destruction of the Poles. In these circumstances it was fortunate that A. Gołuchowski succeeded Zaleski as governor. He was both a loyal official and a tried patriot who guided the country cautiously and systematically through stubborn quarrels with Hammerstein and slowly prepared for restoration of the Polish character of the province.

Poznań, likewise, was not spared post-revolutionary reaction. Although Berlin gave up partition, refrained from persecuting the insurgents and gave the population, at least in part, a new constitution, it removed Polish teachers and officials, dissolved the newly organized Polish League (whose aim was to be the central organ of cultural and economic work in the three sectors of Poland) and tried to incite the peasants against the gentry. The events of 1848 created a deep gulf between the two nations inhabiting the country. The campaign against everything Polish, which the dynasty had carried on with the help of the military and bureaucracy, now involved all classes. "The German friendship for Poland" could not arise again after *Książ*, *Miłosław* and the debates in Frankfurt; and the idea of a Polish buffer state was no longer of interest in German and Prussian politics. A positive factor for the Polish cause in 1848 was the patriotism of the Poznań peasant, whose readiness for struggle and sacrifice surpassed that of the gentry. The unsuccessful insurrection caused the conspiratory and revolutionary programme, which was very popular in the 'forties, to give way before legal endeavour for the good of the country and the defence



of its rights in parliament. Among the other Polish lands under Prussia, West Prussia once more manifested its unity with the Polish national cause, sending volunteers to the Poznań battlefields and protesting in parliament against incorporation into Germany. In Silesia, thanks to the noble German Count Bogedain, the schools were polonized and greatly contributed to the splendid revival of Polish nationality in a province which had, until then, been mercilessly germanized.

## CHAPTER XVI

### POLAND UNDER ALEXANDER II: THE INSURRECTION OF 1863

THE long winter of Nicholas' reign ended as the spring thaws of 1855 began. Throughout the Polish portion of Nicholas' Empire men's spirits began to thaw too: in the Kingdom, in Lithuania, in Podolia and Ukraine. For thirty years the Polish people had lived under an iron-handed master who had no love for their race. They dreamed now that the new Tsar might abandon the punitive and vengeful policy of Nicholas towards Poland. They ventured to hope that Alexander II might even manifest reasonable friendliness towards their race. He had been brought up by a pious, gentle mother. He had been taught in his impressionable years by the kindly Zhukovsky, a tutor who sensed the full gravity and complexity of the Polish question and had required the boy not only to study Polish history but even to master the Polish language. Early in his life, moreover, Alexander had been introduced to his Polish domain, brought by his father to Warsaw as a boy of eleven and crowned in the Royal Castle, there, like his uncle Constantine Pavlovich, to become enchanted with the lovely Polish Princess of Łowicz, there, also like his uncle, to march proudly in a Polish uniform at the head of a Polish regiment.

The aristocratic wing of the Polish Emigration, with its headquarters at the Hotel Lambert in Paris and its agents in every court, did not wait for the new Tsar to indicate his disposition toward Poland. Believing the military and naval collapse in the Crimea to be Poland's opportunity, Prince Adam Czartoryski, dictator of the emigrant aristocracy, made a final effort to bring about a Cossack foray under Polish banners into the old Cossack domain of Ruthenia for the freeing of Poland. To this end the poet Adam Mickiewicz was dispatched in the autumn of 1855 on a special mission to Constantinople and thence to Czajkowski's camp at Burgas. The mission not only proved fatal to the poet, but revealed such a division among the leaders of the enterprise as doomed the plan to inanition.

Next the Emigration's aristocratic wing attempted to have the whole question of Poland's right to national existence reopened at the Congress of Western Powers, which met in Paris in 1856 to conclude peace with Russia. Their activities were fruitless. Poland's last

British champion, Lord Dudley Stuart, had died some months before, still agitating for a Crusade on Poland's behalf, and Count Walewski, presiding at the Congress, failed to introduce the Polish question into the deliberations. Alexander's representative, Count Orlov, was able to close his report to his chief, Nesselrode, with the proud words, "I am completely gratified by the fact that I have not heard the name Poland pronounced at the sessions in the presence of the representatives of the great European Powers." As a final blow, the conferences in Paris revealed a tendency on the part of France which was bound to be deeply resented by the Poles—a noticeable responsiveness to the friendly overtures of Russia. In consequence of the diplomatic revolution of 1854 Polish diplomacy found itself alone on a barren shore; the flood-waters loosed in '53 and '54 had left, as they receded, a world so patterned that Poland's ancient friend and enemy were no longer on opposite sides of an angry current.

Faith in the diplomatic activities of the Emigration had run high in the Kingdom and in Lithuania and Ruthenia. Now its failure to turn Russia's plight to Poland's advantage played directly into the hands of the democratic faction of Poles abroad, the party that was ready at the slightest excuse to fly to arms for Poland's emancipation and whose most active propagandist was General Ludwik Mierosławski. Confidence in the Mierosławski formula for freedom, a nation in arms, mounted among the less responsible Poles as the advocates of salvation through diplomacy were frustrated.

The new Tsar himself, meanwhile, lost no time in revealing his disposition towards Poland. That policy was enlightened self-interest. Even before his coronation, he visited many of the great estates of Lithuania to acquaint himself with representative landowners and to win their co-operation for the social and economic reorganization of the Empire. As Alexander ingratiated himself with his Polish hosts, he discussed with them the twin questions of emancipation and land reform. He found the landowners keenly alive to the necessity for action, not only because they had received warnings in scattered demonstrations of what an aroused peasantry might do, but more specifically because the eastern provinces of Poland had been grievously affected by the introduction of the Russian system of master-serf relationship. There the masters had evicted whole villages of once self-supporting serfs from lands traditionally worked for their own support, transforming them into dependent, landless souls employed in steady compulsory service about the manor house or in the master's fields. The landowners of Lithuania had witnessed, moreover, the

wiping out of that class of petty country squires on whom had always fallen the household service of the higher gentry. Originally these petty squires had been ranked, under Magdeburg Law, as burghers. Later, the Polish provincial administration had recognized them as lower gentry. Russian law enrolled this whole important buffer class with the peasantry, that is as serfs. The debasement, completed only in the final years of Nicholas, was a source of acute unrest.

In Warsaw, as in Lithuania, Alexander held conferences early in his reign with Polish leaders. Here, in the spring of 1856, he was greeted by a spokesman for that group of enlightened landowners from the Kingdom whose plans for agrarian reform were soon to crystallize into the programme of the Agricultural Society. Though he warned them in memorable words of the folly of political dreams, the Tsar nevertheless expressed sympathy with their efforts to alleviate the peasant problem, grave in the Kingdom as in the eastern provinces but of a different character, since here serfdom had ceased from 21 December 1807, leaving a landless peasantry, a ruined agriculture and an almost static population.

During the coronation festivities in Moscow in the late summer of 1856 a delegation of the most powerful magnates of Lithuania urged upon Alexander immediate agrarian reform. They described the ferment among the peasantry throughout the Borderlands. The inventories ordered by his father, especially the mammoth agricultural-industrial inventory of 1852, had convinced the peasants that something was about to be done to relieve their misery; while Czajkowski's romantic dream of a Cossack uprising had unsettled the imagination and released nostalgic longings for the free Cossackdom of song and story. The personal example of Taras Shevchenko, national hero of the Ukrainian folk, together with the pan-Slavist teachings of the Brotherhood of Cyril and Methodius, had awakened nationalist aspirations throughout the southern and central provinces of the Border. As a consequence of what he had himself been thinking and of what the Polish landowners had set before him, Alexander hastened to order his governor-general in Lithuania to collect such data as would help his committee to work out the technique of emancipation and land redistribution.

Meanwhile the Tsar removed the most obvious and provocative abuses. At Warsaw in the spring of 1856 he proclaimed a general amnesty and promised, upon good behaviour, to restore full civil rights to political prisoners and exiles. As viceroy of Poland, after the death in February, 1856, of Paskevich, he appointed a man

more acceptable to the Poles, the rough but kindhearted veteran of half a dozen wars, Nicholas Gorchakov. As governor-general of Lithuania, moreover, the Tsar named Nazimov, while to Ruthenia he sent Ilarion Vasilchikov, men who enjoyed mingling on friendly terms with the Polish gentry and who were ready to interpret more loosely the restrictions on religious worship and travel that had made the era of Nicholas a reign of terror on the eastern border.

A period of "watchful waiting", during which Polish political life was at a low ebb and national agitation quiescent, followed the accession of the new Tsar. Each year brought further evidence of Alexander's lenient disposition. At Warsaw in the autumn of 1857 he legalized the newly organized Agricultural Society and established, at the suggestion of Gorchakov, an Academy of Medicine which the Poles were led to believe would be the first unit of a Polish university. He allowed the work of the important Archaeological Commission in Wilno to proceed unhampered, and permitted the publication of the works of Mickiewicz. On the Polish side the Agricultural Society, under its enlightened president, Andrew Zamoyski, was endeavouring, through personal example and through an agricultural journal, to improve the condition of Polish farming in the Kingdom. Much solid building was going on, for large sections of the population, notably the Jews and that increasingly important group, Polish business men, had already adopted in practice the slogan that became so vital after 1863, "organic work". These groups saw a way of employing Russia's conciliatory policy toward the consolidation of Poland's elements of strength, especially through the new railroad development within the Empire, and the abolition, effective since 1851, of the customs barriers between the Kingdom and Russia proper, an arrangement which was already making Łódź the textile capital of the Empire. Both enlightened landowners and the enlightened *bourgeoisie* knew that Poland's realization of ultimate and permanent statehood was contingent upon widespread prosperity in the Polish domain. The forging of that weapon of national liberation was so absorbing that political agitation was for the moment suspended. Out in the country political life was quiescent during the early years of Alexander II's reign. For the moment masses of the country gentry forgot the essential fact in Russia's relationship towards Poland, the basic unanimity of all classes of Russian society concerning Poland's destiny. They forgot that the Russian Slavophile's conviction that Poland must be annihilated as the tool of the depraved Romano-Germanic world seeking to corrupt Holy Russia was matched by the

Russian Gallophile's conviction that Poland must be annihilated as a rival seeking to bar Russia from western influences.

There were forces at work both without and within the Polish realm preparing bolts of lightning to discharge through the conservative complacency into which a large segment of Polish society was thus drifting. Outside, the strongest of these forces was the democratic wing of the Emigration; inside, the persistent irritation to the Polish conscience from the contemplation of a miserable peasantry and, above all, the force of Polish student life. The democratic wing of the Emigration had its agents wherever there were Poles. These were most effective among the Polish soldiers in the Russian army and among Polish students. Determined to provoke an armed uprising, General Mieroslawski went so far as to establish, in September 1861, a training school for Polish recruits at Cuneo in Piedmont. The peasant, never yet a source of interest to the Polish man of letters, became prominent and gained sympathy during the early years of Alexander's reign. The early tales of the most popular novelist of the day, Kraszewski, Korzeniowski's *Blood Kin*, and the lyrics of Ludwik Kondratowicz, constituted a warning that a social organism so divided within itself as the Polish could not endure. Meanwhile, however, the most unsettling force in Polish life was the Polish student. There had been no school of higher education in Russian Poland since the closing of the Lyceum of Krzemieniec in 1833. Polish youth from the Kingdom who were able to do so studied abroad, especially in Germany. The young men of Lithuania who were sufficiently ambitious and affluent to pursue their studies beyond the gymnasium went mostly to Moscow, St Petersburg and Dorpat; the youth of Podolia and Ukraine mostly to Kiev. At Kiev, where the 800 to 1000 Poles formed two-thirds of the university population, there arose soon after the death of Nicholas a Polish society, called The Trinity. Its moving spirit was Apollo Korzeniowski, the father of Joseph Conrad. At first its objective was purely spiritual: to nourish resistance to the idea then insinuating itself into the class from which most of the students came, that national emancipation could be achieved through political co-operation with Russia or with the Tsar. Its purpose was thus to keep alive the flame of Polish nationality and the conviction that, though the Powers considered Poland as dead, enough energy to save the nation still survived. Its ideals and discipline were at first identical with those of the Philarets of Mickiewicz's day in Wilno. It received strong encouragement from the Polish clergy.

Slowly and imperceptibly but inevitably "The Trinity" became

political. By 1858 its members had established contact with Polish students in all parts of the Russian Empire as well as with General Mierosławski in Paris. They had formed a super-organization that co-ordinated the activities of the isolated groups within university walls. Alike in quiet Dorpat and in more agitated Petersburg and Moscow, one question in the late 'fifties was debated: what part shall youth play in the life of a state ruled by a foreign master? Few would concede that a Pole should so far sacrifice his national pride as to co-operate with the foreigner; few, on the other hand, could view without a shudder the alternative of revolution.

The patriotic agitation generated spontaneously within student groups was fed from outside by literature, by encouragement from the army of exiles now returning from Siberia, and from Polish soldiers in the Russian army, as well as by the prompting of agents from General Mierosławski. *Polish News*, a journal published by the Emigration in Paris, was widely circulated; the bi-weekly *Word* which began to appear in January 1859, in St Petersburg, had a large subscription list among Polish students in Dorpat and Kiev as well as in the local university and in Moscow. Inspired by Edward Żeligowski, who had spent years in a Russian prison and had shared confidences in Orenburg with that apostle of human freedom, Taras Shevchenko, the short-lived journal was the mouthpiece of idealistic youth. A small Polish publishing house, set up in Żytomir in 1859 by a handful of patriotic young men from the Borderlands, was for a few months the source of inflammatory literature. In St Petersburg, during the academic year 1858-59, the patriot Bobrowski, Joseph Conrad's uncle, formed that friendship with two officers in the Russian army, Padlewski and Dąbrowski, which led to their future co-operation as virtual dictators. Sooner or later this ferment was bound to reach Warsaw.

By the autumn of 1859 the new Academy of Medicine had begun to draw students away from the Russian universities. From Kiev, Moscow, St Petersburg and Dorpat young men began to transfer to Warsaw. The Academy soon became the rallying ground for students inoculated with the ideas of General Mierosławski. A Circle of Brotherly Help was organized, with definite plans for an armed uprising and a library of books banned by the censor. The old romantic poets were read and their spell became potent again. Historical tales were devoured, and Szajnoch's *Jadwiga and Jagiello*, smuggled in from Lwów, became a powerful factor in re-cementing relations between the Kingdom and the Borderlands, and in reminding the young Pole of the imperishable Polish-Lithuanian union. The death

of the poet Krasinski, in February 1859, induced re-reading of his works, especially his *Before Dawn*, so that a new generation became converted to the ideal of Poland's messianic destiny. Italy, especially from the spring of 1859, both intoxicated and aroused Polish students. Bitter indeed was the contrast between the course of the liberal movement outside Poland and within! Students both in Warsaw and far away dreamed of making Mirosławski Poland's Garibaldi.

By the middle of 1860 the hopeful nirvana of the first years of Alexander's reign yielded to an era of despair. The Academy of Medicine had not flowered into a Polish university; intellectual life in the Kingdom was still as stifled as it had been under Paskevich, with Mukhanov, Paskevich's own right-hand man, to nip in the bud such ventures as the *Word*, to weed out non-conformists in the Academy of Medicine by special examinations and to dictate the repertoire of the Polish theatre. Five years of a liberal régime had brought Poland no nearer freedom than in the darkest days of Nicholas. The resentment seething under the surface of Polish life began to show itself in the summer of 1860. The funeral of Madame Sowińska, widow of the general who fell defending Warsaw in 1831, was made the occasion of an enormous popular demonstration in the capital. Carrying the banners of the faith that distinguishes a Pole from a Russian, the paraders chanted with religious solemnity the moving words of "God Save Poland!" There could be felt, rising like a menacing wave, a mighty crescendo of will to martyrdom. "The time has come", wrote a Polish lady, "for the victory of our Fatherland. It will win in the manner of the first Christians, by martyrdom.... The spilling of blood, the voluntary offering up of life, that is the price of the existence of a free, independent Fatherland." The protest of those who aimed at liberty by pocketing racial pride and striving for Polish economic power went unheeded.

After the Sowińska affair every unusual event and every national anniversary was made the occasion for a more passionate demonstration than the one before. Thus in October the hot-heads of Warsaw turned the conference of the three East European monarchs into an orgy, even burning the triumphal arches and pouring vitriol over the imperial box at the theatre. Every date in the calendar which an event of 1830-31 had underlined was marked by mass demonstrations. That Polish blood would soon be shed on the streets of the Polish capital became inevitable.

In February 1861, all the violent elements in Polish society converged on Warsaw at the same time that all the sane and orderly



elements were meeting there in conference. The occasion was the annual convention of the Agricultural Society. With nearly a thousand members, this society was looked up to as the moral government of Poland, and its President, Andrew Zamoyski, as Poland's moral ruler. It was now ready to present its solution of the agrarian problem in the Kingdom. The great majority of the Polish gentry were not eager to supplant the field-service of the peasants by a system of rent. The Agricultural Society, however, accepted the change as a national necessity. Beyond this opinion was divided: the more advanced wing, led by Thomas Potocki, one of the "grand old men" of Poland, viewed any system whereby land was rented to the peasantry as only a station on the road to ultimate peasant ownership of the land, and demanded credit operations that would facilitate peasant ownership and make it a certainty. Zamoyski, holding the English system of land tenure as the ideal, could not see beyond rental. Though Zamoyski's influence was tremendous, a resolution favouring Potocki's plan was finally passed.

For a long time the Polish students at Kiev had been dissatisfied because the chair of Polish Language and Literature had never been filled. They contended that since the University of Kiev had really been organized in 1835 for the Tsar's Polish subjects, its true purpose would never be realized until lectures were given in Polish. Dissatisfaction came to a head as the academic year 1860-61 opened. The students thought of all sorts of ways of laying their case before the Tsar himself: first they planned to do it through their own members, a delegation to be chosen by lot; then they conceived the plan of doing it through the mediation of the Ukrainian Vladimir Antonowicz, who stood well with the government; but all their schemes failed. Failing to secure a direct approach to the Tsar, the Polish students sent a delegation to Warsaw to present their programme and to request the Agricultural Society to intercede for them.

The delegation came to Warsaw warmed by the conviction that they were on a sacred mission. Once in the capital, the young men from Kiev decided to summon a conference of Polish students from all parts of the realm. They waited in Warsaw, therefore, until delegates could arrive from Dorpat, Moscow and St Petersburg. Students from the School of Fine Arts and from Marymont joined them, and their delegation was augmented still further by the patriotic young fire-eaters of the city, students and artisans alike. Here was the party known as the "Reds". They had made it their single purpose to force the Agricultural Society to turn political. It must do what the

Poles of Galicia did in 1848 when they sent Franciszek Smolka at the head of a deputation to the Emperor with a catalogue of Polish grievances and demands. Potocki, together with the group in the Society that was even more radical than he, supported the idea. Zamoyski, whose whole career had been founded on social and economic service to Poland but scrupulous non-participation in politics, bitterly opposed such a course.

Neither Zamoyski nor the "Reds" would yield. Warsaw, meanwhile, had become a city charged with patriotism so intense and so passionate as to render peace virtually impossible. On 27 February a tremendous demonstration was staged, in the course of which Russian troops charged the crowds; at least five persons were killed and many more wounded. The streets had decided: on the 28th a telegram was dispatched to the Tsar.

Potocki's brother-in-law, the Marquis Alexander Wielopolski, had brought to Warsaw a plan which he presented to the Agricultural Society. He recognized as the central cause of Poland's impotence the preponderance of a single class, and proposed to remedy this by complete reorganization of Polish society. Unlike the members of the Society however, he proposed to do this through the closest co-operation with the Tsar and by strictly legislative means. He had no patience with such extra-legal activities as those of the Agricultural Society. Through guarantees of loyalty to the Tsar on the Polish side, Wielopolski was confident that he could secure the restoration of Poland to its constitutional status of 1815, the status which had been guaranteed by the Powers and which had the moral support of the world. Liquidating thus the whole dark era of Nicholas, he proposed to build, on the foundation of 1815, a Poland strong through widespread enlightenment and the prosperity which was bound to come through the opening of Russia's vast market to Polish business. Wielopolski's utopian scheme was, however, rejected by the Agricultural Society, and its author retired to his estate.

After the violent eruption of late February, Gorchakov, urged by the Russian government to use a strong hand yet dreading the consequences, entrusted the maintenance of order in Warsaw to a committee of Polish citizens. The town draped itself in black and a hush settled over it. A public collection was taken for the burial of the martyred dead. Finally the dead were buried and an air of ecstatic sanctity pervaded the capital.

On 25 March came the Tsar's answer to the Polish demands. He accepted a Council of State which should consist of the dignitaries of

the realm, both secular and ecclesiastical, with the right to examine petitions and complaints from Polish citizens. He agreed to the establishment of a Commission of Public Instruction and Religions which should thoroughly reform the schools and establish schools of higher education, including a law school. He also approved the election of provincial and local assemblies in the country districts.

Both Gorchakov and his adviser, Julius Enoch, Procurator-General of the Senate, agreed that conciliation would be more likely to succeed if a Pole headed the new régime. Wielopolski was considered by them and by the Tsar as the best candidate. Though suspected during his sojourn in Petersburg years before of Wallenrodism, Wielopolski had since written and spoken so often in favour of co-operation with the Tsar that suspicion had been allayed. Wielopolski's ideas, moreover, coincided with those of Enoch who, since 1858, had repeatedly told the Tsar that to pacify Poland he should seek support in the rising middle class, whose interests were all interwoven with Russia's own. On 27 March 1861, therefore, Wielopolski was made head of the Commission of Public Instruction and Religions, Member of the Council of Administration, Organizer of the Council of State and of local councils, director of agrarian reform and of Jewish emancipation, head of the departments of Justice and the Interior, guide to the Governor-General and the Viceroy, and their adviser with respect to the army. All the powers implicit in these offices Wielopolski concentrated in his own hands with alacrity. Calm, proud, and self-confident, he remained unmoved by the universal opposition from his compatriots to his appointment. During his virtual dictatorship, from April to October 1861, and from June 1862 to January 1863, he worked at what he considered his two-fold mission, the reorganization of Polish society through solution of the peasant question and through nourishment of a middle class; and the re-polonization of education and administration in the Kingdom in so far as this was compatible with the law of the Empire.

His second purpose Wielopolski accomplished. Not only did he found a variety of new schools, but he restored the Polish language and spirit in those existing, even in the Warsaw "High School", ancestor of the present Piłsudski University. Through his efforts, moreover, the language of civil and local administration again became Polish. In reorganizing Poland economically and socially, however, he was singularly unsuccessful. He made himself the target for all the hatred of the Polish youth and clergy against the Russian government. Within a few days of his appointment, he dissolved the Agricultural

Society, thus incurring all the resentment which his own class, preponderant in Polish society, had felt toward Russia since 1830. He thus cut off all possibility of co-operation with those upon whose help success depended. Emancipation of the Jews, long a fixed tenet of Wielopolski's creed, had no salutary effect. The new freedom of movement with full civil and political rights brought great numbers of Jews to the cities, and though for a while Jews joined in popular demonstrations, displaying every evidence of a desire to be Polish, their competition was resented by the small Polish business man, so that animosity was engendered rather than allayed. Finally, the land reform which Wielopolski's Commission devised, at the Tsar's express order, proved of no avail. Nullified, for the most part, by the passive resistance of the gentry, this proved, wherever carried out, a source of dissatisfaction to the peasant, giving him far less generous landownership than did the celebrated manifesto of the Tsar which had been issued for the eastern provinces in March.

Between the two portions of the Polish realm, the Kingdom and the Borderlands, there had existed since the 'thirties little communication except that of a social nature and that among students already described. The gentry and the peasantry on the two sides of the line had become somewhat divorced from each other. Through Paris, however, contact had been kept alive and in May 1861, came the first popular evidence that Lithuania at least was ready to march with the Kingdom on the road of martyrdom: in the Cathedral of St Stanisław in Wilno on that day the Polish congregation sang "*Boże coś Polskę*" and thenceforth there was no harnessing the patriotic tide. In demonstration after demonstration inside the churches and on the village streets of Lithuania the populace answered the question which many had asked: Was the east one in spirit with Poland, as of old, or lured by Russia? By 12 August 1861, on the anniversary of the Union of Lublin, when a gigantic demonstration shook all Lithuania, the answer was clear: the east was with Poland. Relations between the Kingdom and the Borderlands became increasingly close as the autumn of 1861 advanced. Huge demonstrations were staged. Eventually, through the personal energy and devotion of Stefan Bobrowski and a handful of others like him, a conspiracy was formed with adherents in every corner of the realm.

In the capital patriotic fervour reached such a pitch that there was bound to be a recession or revolution. The climax was reached on 15 October, the anniversary of the death of Kościuszko. The Viceroy, Count Lambert, and Wielopolski resigned and the Governor-General

On 16 January the Central National Committee resolved to call the nation to arms. It took this desperate step in the face of a meagre treasury and a pitifully inadequate fighting force. The Committee had only some 16,000 roubles and no rich members. It could set no more than 10,000 men in arms against Russia's 100,000, and these were badly equipped and trained. Their only commander was Mieroslawski, and he was not only barren of adequate plans but actually so unpopular that in Kujawy the merest handful gathered at his side. The nation was not, moreover, united in purpose, as the Committee knew. Only in the cities, among the young officials and the sons of officials as well as in the artisan class, and in the country, among the lower gentry, was the sentiment for war hearty and general.

The Committee's first act was to make Mieroslawski dictator, in recognition of his past services and to appease his highly vocal supporters. For years his very name had been a bugle call to arms among Polish youth. Now when the test came the old general proved impotent. Bobrowski and Padlewski wielded the actual power.

Next the Committee attempted to make the war a genuine rising of the people. On the 22nd of that fateful January, 1863, it announced the unconditional and permanent emancipation and the complete enfranchisement of every person in the Polish realm without regard to race, religion or previous condition of bondage. The decree was variously received. Abroad, where the uprising had been regarded as a class conflict strongly tinged with socialism, it won for the Committee the widest acclaim; the persons it was intended to benefit, however, remained apathetic. Though in isolated villages the peasantry rose through loyalty to some individual commander, the Polish regiments more generally found their hardships and hazards aggravated rather than alleviated by the very peasants whom the new régime was intent on conciliating.

On the night of 22 January there occurred simultaneously all over Poland uprisings of the Polish soldiers within the Russian army. Since no competent military command existed, the insurrection continued to be a war in which small bands arose here or there under such leaders as the emergency produced. These employed as fortifications the forests and marshes of the countryside: for weapons they used whatever they could find.

At first the Kingdom was the exclusive theatre of military operations and the two concentration points were Podlasia and Sandomierz. The latter produced the first notable commander in General Marian Langiewicz, a veteran, some forty-five years old, of the Garibaldi

campaign and an ex-teacher in Mierosławski's short-lived school at Cuneo. In the mining town of Wąchock, near Kielce, Langiewicz organized a munitions factory and gathered about a thousand men. This army, augmented eventually to about three thousand, became the object of a bitter Russian attack from two directions at once, from Kielce and Radom. Its heroism in the face of desperate odds and unspeakable brutality on the part of the Russian army, quickly captured the popular imagination.

The "Whites", concentrated in Cracow, saw an opportunity to use the sudden rise of Langiewicz to confound the Red Central National Committee in Warsaw. On 10 March 1863, without knowledge of the Committee, the "Whites" had General Langiewicz proclaimed military dictator of Poland. The horrified Committee accepted him only on condition that, as civil dictator, he would employ as advisers men agreeable to themselves. This was agreed, and from 12 to 21 March Langiewicz was dictator of the Polish nation. Abroad great hope was felt that he would win a quick and decisive victory. But on 21 March, after fighting heroically against hopeless odds, Langiewicz took refuge in Austrian territory and submitted to arrest and internment. In Poland, fortunately, no extravagant hopes had been centred in Langiewicz. The collapse of his dictatorship had not, therefore, so discouraging an effect in Poland as abroad. Late in March and all through April there were signs that the Insurrection was likely to succeed. The war extended beyond the Kingdom until all Lithuania had taken up arms for union with Poland. The Central Committee had been reorganized, principally through the efforts of Bobrowski, so that one of the "Whites", Karol Rupprecht, was now a member, and financial support from the rich business men and the wealthy landowners was probable. Finally, diplomatic intervention by the Powers who had guaranteed Poland's national existence at Vienna in 1815 seemed likely to bear fruit. Abroad sympathy was mounting for the Polish cause as a general rising of the nation was predicted.

The diplomatic activities of the Western Powers began in February. On 13 February the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, wrote to the Russian Ambassador in Paris calling attention to the fact that the Polish question was arousing unprecedented sympathy in France. Again, on the 17th, after the Prusso-Russian Convention of the 8th which allowed Russian agents to cross the Prussian border in search of Polish fugitives, Drouyn instructed his representative in Berlin that Prussia's departure from neutrality had made the Polish question a European issue. The Emperor

Napoleon, moreover, personally urged Alexander II to restore Poland's national rights. The answer was a categorical refusal.

Early in March, Lord Russell wrote to Russia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gorchakov, urging the restoration of Poland to the status guaranteed by the Treaties of Vienna, with an amnesty to Poles involved in the Insurrection.

On 1 April, to celebrate the Russian Easter, the Tsar proclaimed an amnesty to all Poles who should by 1 May lay down their arms and swear loyalty to the Imperial government. Knowing the temper of the Poles, the Powers understood the futility of such an offer. On 10 April, England and France, with Austria a furtive and uneasy third, addressed similar notes to the Tsar's minister protesting against Russian policy in Poland. They asked for the restoration of the Kingdom to its status under the Treaties of Vienna and the inclusion of Lithuania and Ruthenia. In Gorchakov's reply Russia informed the Powers that they had failed to comprehend the true nature of the Insurrection: that it was the work of foreign revolutionaries and that it should not be mistaken for a national uprising, since none but the petty gentry, the village priests and the artisans of the city had joined it. The note called attention, moreover, to the amnesty offered by the Tsar.

On 10 May the Central National Committee declared itself the National Government. This body repudiated the Tsar's offer, reiterated the terms demanded of Constantine, and confirmed the decree of emancipation of 22 January. A campaign designed to win the peasantry of the Ukraine and Podolia to the Insurrection was now undertaken on their own initiative by a group of young patriots from the Border. Leaving Kiev under cover of rain and darkness, concealed in peasants' carts, they bore the news of freedom to the people. These, they believed, would rise in a great army under Polish standards. From a document called "The Golden Writ" they proposed to read the glad tidings. In one village a touching scene of brotherhood with the ex-serfs was actually enacted; but in the end the people, aroused by the police and by their priests, set upon the young evangelists and slew them. The affair was symbolic of the fate of the Insurrection throughout Ruthenia.

In Lithuania, however, and in Polish Livonia and Courland, the Insurrection was a genuine "uprising of the people" and worked havoc with the Russian army. To crush resistance in the north-east, the Tsar dispatched in June a special agent entrusted with full power to act as necessity dictated. This agent was the man whose name in

all languages has become synonymous with brutality, Muravyev. Muravyev's initial acts were directed toward ruining Lithuania economically by seizure of the estates and by the exile and hanging of their owners. His later endeavours were devoted to deliberately arousing class against class, and subsidizing an incessant *jacquerie*.

In the same month of June the Western Powers dispatched a joint note on the 11th to St Petersburg. Poland, they declared, must have a completely national administration within the framework of the Russian Empire, so that her full national development might be assured; religious liberty and use of the Polish language both publicly and privately must be guaranteed; amnesty must be granted to persons and property involved in the Insurrection; hostilities must cease at once; and a conference must be held of the signatories of the Treaties of Vienna.

Gorchakov replied that he could not treat with the Poles until the Insurrection had been crushed. He accepted the demands of the Powers in principle but reserved the right to interpret them.

Diplomacy had so far failed to benefit the Polish cause. Now, however, it increased the prestige of the "Whites" so that by July this faction dominated the National Government, injecting new courage into its every move. Władysław Czarotorski was sent to London and Paris in full charge of diplomatic negotiations. The National Government felt strong enough, in spite of military discouragement, to warn Russia that the ultimatum concerning the imperishability of the Polish-Lithuanian union still stood. Moreover, it gave notice to the Powers that their demands would not satisfy the Polish nation. Buoyed up by the promises of Czarotorski, they failed to comprehend that the fate which had befallen the Red faction's hopes of foreign help had now overtaken their own. The Red Central National Committee in January 1863, had pinned their faith on a simultaneous uprising of the liberals in the Russian army. A week of warfare, however, had transformed the liberal cosmopolitan of Moscow into the most nationalist patriot. The "Whites", even as late as in the summer of '63, still hoped that France and probably also England, so recently a partisan of the oppressed races in the Balkans, would come to the rescue. They failed to reckon with the fact that both France and England were affected by the embryonic Russo-French *rapprochement*, and also that both were involved in embarrassing problems in North America. The Czarotorski wing, moreover, relied on Austria. Convinced that the easy-going administrator of Galicia, at odds with Russia since 1854, would furnish active support for Poland, the "Whites"



failed to take into account the fundamental interest which bound Austria to Russia as a co-partitioner of the Polish state.

By August, the Tsar, through his new Viceroy Theodore Berg, a Baltic German trained by Paskevich, had established in the Kingdom a régime rivalled in severity only by Muravyev's in Lithuania. All the representatives of conciliation had left Warsaw. Wielopolski had made off to Berlin in July; Constantine, eager to get out of the capital from the moment Berg entered it, had been permitted to return to St Petersburg. News from the fighting areas buoyed up hopes in late August, as the peasants of the extreme north-east made heroic resistance. Soon this collapsed, and by September the "Reds", robbed now by death of Bobrowski, took over the National Government once more.

At this abysmal moment the Polish question was declared by Gorchakov to be a dead issue internationally. In replying to the third remonstrance of the Powers he gave notice that the Tsar refused to treat with the Poles until the Insurrection had been put down. He assured the Powers, moreover, with an air of finality, that the Tsar would assume full responsibility for Poland's destiny. With the Schleswig-Holstein question looming on the diplomatic horizon, the Powers acquiesced. Gorchakov's declaration, delivered in mid-September, marked the end of the diplomatic negotiations.

The "Reds" in Warsaw resorted to violence. On 19 September an attempt was made to assassinate Count Berg, with the consequence that the full fury of Muscovite vengeance was released on the city.

All this time there had been no unified and competent military command. Out of the multiplicity of commanders who had distinguished themselves, one now emerged to take his place at the helm of the nation and to make a genuine effort to bring about order and to establish a true Polish army. This was Romuald Traugutt, thirty-seven years old, a native of the Grodno district, and an ex-officer in the Russian army. In May, Traugutt had first distinguished himself in a series of fierce battles on the Kobryń-Pińsk road. Since that time his prestige had continually mounted, so that in the summer he was sent abroad as Commissioner-Extraordinary for War. The middle of October saw Traugutt back in Poland as Dictator. Upon his appointment the most violent "Reds" left Warsaw, and their leader Mierosławski was dismissed from military rank. The National Government, with the poet Adam Asnyk among its members, settled down to quiet work. Traugutt resolved to turn the hopes of the nation away from outside intervention and towards its true source of strength, its own peasantry.

To win them Traugutt sent out agents all over the country to explain the decree of emancipation. But his efforts were in vain. Since the 'forties the Russian government had been quietly teaching the peasant to look to the Tsar for help and to distrust his Polish landlord. Such efforts had been particularly successful in Podolia and the Ukraine where the peasantry on the right bank of the Dnieper could look with envy beyond the river and see their kinsfolk in Russia enjoying greater freedom to circulate books and pamphlets and every variety of nationalistic material than they were enjoying at that moment in Poland. Now the Russian government devoted its efforts towards winning the peasantry of the Kingdom.

In the summer of '63 Nicholas Miliutin was sent by Alexander to the Kingdom to co-operate with Muravyev and Berg. His instructions were to administer agrarian reform so as to render another insurrection of the Polish gentry for ever impossible. Thus, while military operations dragged on for many more months, in the far north-east even into 1865, Miliutin was quietly preparing a programme for the settlement of the agrarian problem that was to prove epoch-making. Miliutin's plan was promulgated in a series of imperial decrees on 2 March 1864. In accordance with their provisions the peasant was freed for ever from field service to a landlord and allotted land for ultimate ownership. The amount assigned him was generous, four times, on the average, the amount parcelled out to the Russian peasant in the reforms of 1861. As immediate compensation the former owner received bonds which were to be paid up out of income received from two sources: from quit-rents paid by the new owners and from a general land tax paid by everyone who owned land. Thus, by a device never employed in Russia, the Polish landlord was taxed to pay bonds due to himself.

By another provision of the Miliutin decrees the entire population of a given area was organized into a so-called *gmina*. In the *gmina* everyone who owned a certain minimum of land enjoyed equal suffrage, with the consequence that the peasants soon had a controlling voice. The arbitration of disputes was entrusted to officers of the Tsar. When disputes arose, and they arose often, since woods and pastures were used in common, the peasants were taught to look to the Tsar's police for adjustment in their favour. By every device, subtle and open, it was drilled into the consciousness of the peasant that the Tsar was his friend, the Polish *pan* his enemy.

The triumph of the Imperial Government over the Polish nation was signalized not only by the proclamation and acceptance of the

Miliutin decrees but, more bitterly, by a scene enacted on a public square in the Polish capital on 5 August 1864. On that day Traugutt and four of his colleagues were publicly hanged. It was the end, to all intents and purposes, of the most heroic, if ill-advised, armed uprising in all Poland's history. The formula for national salvation under which it had been undertaken had been proved a will-o'-the-wisp. It was quickly repudiated by the generation that came to maturity after 1864.

The origins of Poland's thinking and doing alike after 1864 are discoverable in the fifties of Alexander's reign. Far back in those busy, earnest years the ideal of "organic work", of constructive building, was preached by leaders of Polish society, even, as we have seen, by two men so opposite in temperament and method as Zamoyski and Wielopolski. Both had been silenced by the din of arms; both died in exile, discredited by the pragmatic test. Yet even while the armed conflict which both regretted was at its fiercest, others of the same conviction silently carried forward the building of national prosperity. What these had accomplished became apparent only when peace descended on the nation.

Then it was seen that the maelstrom of 1861-64 had affected but slightly the steady, persistent undercurrent of Poland's material progress. While warfare raged, the directors of the Polish Bank and such far-sighted industrialists as Leopold Kronenberg worked. After 1864, when the Kingdom became an integral part of the Empire and a network of railroads bound the Vistula Provinces more closely each year to the markets of Petersburg, Moscow and finally Kiev, Polish industry could even capture the business of the Empire from cities closer to its heart. The textile mills of Łódź and Warsaw and Żyrardów had in the meantime been brought thoroughly up-to-date in mechanical equipment; the sugar, woollen, alcohol and tanning industries had been expanded, and the mining and metallurgical industries of Sosnowiec-Dąbrowa in the rich Silesian coal basin had been established.

Freed in 1851 from customs restrictions on goods going to Russia, and having now, in consequence of the Miliutin decrees, an inexhaustible supply of workers, Polish industry leaped ahead after 1864. It had already passed from the cottage and manor house to the individual factory stage; now it quickly advanced to the capitalistic. The outstanding phenomenon of the final decade of Alexander II's reign became the growth of industrial concentration. By 1870 West European capitalism had settled in Poland.

It is obviously a misinterpretation of Polish history to find in the last years of Alexander's era a Poland changed completely from the Poland before 1863. Neither the Polish temperament nor the Polish character nor the high quality of Polish home life, the three constants in Poland's history, changed appreciably under the terrible lesson. Yet there did occur after 1863 a re-orientation of Polish thinking that was ultimately reflected in action. A formula repudiated in 1860 became the slogan of the nation as new times induced new ideas and a new technique.

The late 'sixties and the 'seventies were new times indeed. Instead of the traditional two classes four were being formed: the free peasantry, a city population of factory workers and small business men, a country gentry reduced through agrarian redistribution, and a wealthy capitalist class. The consequences of the economic revolution since 1850 were sometimes appalling. Masses of people who had lived since the beginning of time on the land were now hurled into ugly new industrial settlements; social vices were spreading. Life in the Kingdom took its colour and spirit from industry.

When Western Europe, some decades before, had been industrialized, a philosophy that somewhat reconciled the natural yearnings of the human spirit to the new, materialistic age, had been formulated by Auguste Comte in his works on *Positive Philosophy* which appeared from 1830 to 1854. In Poland, Comte was discussed as early as 1844, but his ideals did not then fit in with Polish life. After 1864, however, the young men of Warsaw, alumni of the university which Wielopolski had brought into being, assuming the spiritual leadership of the nation, began to call themselves, after Comte, Positivists.

Like every movement or institution imported into Poland, Positivism quickly acclimatized itself. Comte's principle that intelligence and reason determine the direction of expansion caused the young men of Warsaw to ascribe Poland's national suicide to the transcendence in their elders of emotion over reason. Since the Comtian system made sociology the chief of the sciences, they deemed it the panacea for the nation's ills: and demanded that the fatherland should be built anew on the basis of Comtian study. Finally they proclaimed the nobility of work, the desirability of gymnastic and mechanical training and the necessity for women's emancipation. For the literature of the age they discovered a foundation in Poland's own literary past. Protests like theirs against the cult of sweet suffering had long before been wrung from the heart of Słowacki in the exquisitely bitter *Tomb of Agamemnon*, and realism beyond the powers of any con-

temporary they found in Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. These poet-seers gained new devotees, but now the wounded Conradian Mickiewicz and the Anhellian Słowacki of their fathers were abandoned for a Mickiewicz and a Słowacki of sterner fibre, "tempered, not likely to break in pieces". Even Kraszewski, representative though he was of the elders whom the young Positivists were criticizing, was not only found to have written remarkably realistic sketches of Volhynian life but was heard at the very moment voicing their own demands, as, from his exile in Dresden, he cried: "Endure, do not run away, do not emigrate, for that is always a cowardly thing to do...Guard and cherish the Polish hearth that is the Polish school...and above all, be done with insurrections."

The flower of Polish society did not emigrate after 1864, as it had done after 1831. The year 1863 had freed Poland from its old Emigration and from the temptation to create another. The Poles could now consecrate their lives to the task of building, "from the bottom up", a restored nation.

When Alexander's ill-fated reign was cut short by his violent end in 1881, nothing undertaken in Poland since 1864 had matured. None could tell whether the new flow of capital would be so wisely directed and so generous as to exploit fully and to Poland's advantage the nation's human and natural resources. The effects of the adjustment in 1877 of Polish industry to the Empire's new tariff policy would be seen only in the next decade. The embryonic Polish proletariat was as yet inarticulate, exploited, unorganized and hardly aware of the world currents of thought that were in the next era to make it respectable. Partition of the land was proceeding in the west, but beyond the frontier of the Kingdom on the east it was a myth. Russification, now a definite policy of the Tsar, had not been applied with the severity of later years, though already, in 1869, the university of Warsaw had been Russianized, while the Pole and his language were inexorably being driven out of public life. The group of writers which included Marja Konopnicka and Eliza Orzeszkowa from Lithuania became mature only in the following decades.

Although nothing had come to full fruition in Poland by 1881, the effect upon Polish national life of the final fifteen years of Alexander II's reign was tremendous.

## CHAPTER XVII

### RUSSIAN POLAND IN THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE half century to be surveyed in these pages began in sorrow, not to say despair, to end on the very opposite note. The failure of the insurrection left the Polish nation almost prostrate. Neither at home nor abroad did there seem to be a ray of light on the horizon, and an unexpected change came over the minds of all. Save for the riotings of 1905, the whole period was to pass without an appeal to violence, without a concerted blow struck for national independence. The reasons for this fact will emerge as we proceed. Actually the spirit of the Polish people was never broken, or the hope of a better future resigned. The end remained as before—liberation, but the paths to be taken toward this goal were radically changed. For most of this period it was the policy of such leaders as appeared to eschew politics, in favour of what was called realism. For that reason the task of the historian is somewhat unusual. Until after the turn of the century, the part of Poland dominated by Russia cannot be said to have a political history at all.

To the patriot Pole, who surveyed Europe in 1864, things could not look other than dismal. Accustomed for generations to see the hope of his nation in a favourable international situation, he could not with the wildest stretch of fancy expect such a thing now. In the sequel this situation was to get worse rather than better. With three victories in seven years Prussia was to humble Denmark, Austria, and France; and the disaster of Sedan was a body-blow to any expectation entertained by the Poles. Nevertheless, one of the purposes of this chapter will be to show that again, as so often in life, things are not quite what they seem. It can be argued that, in the light of the forces that make for true national strength and give the assurance of survival in the modern world, Poland was in a better position in the 'seventies than she had been for a century. Processes were at work whose fulfilment was to bring new power; at last there was in formation that indispensable factor in national well-being—a healthy and growing middle class. The time was soon to come when one could speak with truth of a Polish nation in the modern sense; so that both the trials that

came with the World War and the opportunities which it brought could be faced with high hopes. The ordeal was not pleasant, but it was necessary. A striking formulation of it was given by the novelist, Bolesław Prus:

When a bullet strikes a wall, it halts and generates heat. In mechanics this process is called the transforming of mass motion into molecular, of what was outward into an inner force. Something like this happened in Poland after the cruel quelling of the insurrection. The nation as a whole woke up, ceased to fight and to conspire, and began to think and to work.

True, nothing of this could be foreseen by those who surveyed the ruin of all the expectations raised by the insurgents; nor by those who heard the warnings uttered by Tsar Alexander II in 1865, repeating what he had said years before, "Pas de rêveries". But it is significant of the change of temper passing over the Poles as a people that the *Poznań Daily* could make an almost favourable comment on this warning, by contrast with the indignation of a decade earlier; and even recall the words of Staszic from the days of the Partitions, "Unite with the Russians and educate yourselves!"

In this there was, of course, nothing new. It had been the central purpose of Wielopolski's career to achieve that very end, and a less vindictive policy on the part of St Petersburg would have rendered it at least a possibility. As things turned out, however, nothing of the kind could happen. The Committee of Reconstruction set up by the Russians in 1864, both by its policy and by the methods used, was bound to alienate such of the Poles as sought reconciliation. It soon became clear that, as in Prussia, so here, the government regarded the landed gentry and the clergy as traitors and its sworn enemies. For years a concerted effort was made, following on the emancipation of the serfs, to win over the peasant class to loyalty toward the Tsar, and to cement this loyalty by the promise of land grants. A deputation of Polish peasants was received with honours in St Petersburg in 1864, and Secretary of State Platanov addressed them in the Tsar's name, thanking them for their loyalty. Time was to show that these promises would never be kept, for the lands taken from thousands of Polish owners were given rather to Russian officials or other immigrants, so that the peasant was little better off than before. What is more, the time soon came when the sons of the peasants began to be taken as recruits for the Imperial army, and many of them spent years of their time far away from their native land.

The choice of the people who were to establish the new order in

Poland, made by the Tsar's advisers, was anything but fortunate. All the world knows the name and fame of "the hangman" Muravyev, whose years of administration in Lithuania were little less than a reign of terror. The two men who took charge on the Vistula itself, Milyutin and Cherkasky, were somewhat less brutal, but succeeded in inaugurating what became after 1867 a ruthless programme of Russianization. The very name "Poland" was removed from the map, and the phrase "Vistula Land" put in its place. Polish officials were removed from office, Russian was made the official language of the country, Polish law courts and schools were abolished, and a special band of foreign officials brought in—with supplements to their salaries: all of which was in direct contravention to the undertakings given at the Congress of Vienna fifty years earlier.

At the same time it was completely in keeping with the trends prevailing in Europe, and with the growing urge for unity in Russia. The publicist Katkov put it very well in 1867, when he demanded a single common language for all citizens of the Empire, a single common faith, and a single Slavonic type of commune. "Everything which stands in our way we shall break down. For no one will we show any compassion." It was the same Katkov who paid a back-handed compliment to the Poles in his curious phrase: "To reduce them to the level of Russian stupidity." A sample of this whole view can be seen in the argument of the director of education, Witte, that "the Polish language is a dialect, and should be welded together with the great literature of Russia: on the example of the Serbs and Czechs, who wished to forget their own jargon and literature, and be merged with the Russian". As the sequel showed, this grandiose aim was never anywhere near being realized, but the abolition of the Polish university in Warsaw in 1869 and the tactics adopted toward the Uniate church, culminating in its abolition in 1874, were a fair specimen of the ends in view.

In Central Poland, scarcely less than in the provinces ruled by Prussia, there was being waged a battle of civilizations. At a time when Russia was much under the influence of the Slavophiles, the conviction was strong that Russia was called to lead the world to better things. Western Europe was slipping into decline and light would come from the East! Why not then begin this great work with Poland, taking first the lands of mixed population east of the Bug River, and then going on to the solidly Polish Vistula provinces? Seeing that the rulers in Poland in the past had proved their unfitness, was it not right that the law of natural selection prevailing in the



physical world should also be valid in that of cultural and social relations?

Of course the way to this would be one of ruthlessness—again copying nature. Hence the brutalities of Muravyev in the borderlands, from which Polish landowners and the Catholic Church suffered most. Not only were the estates confiscated, and their owners for the most part banished; but discriminating laws made it illegal for Poles to acquire land, or even to accept it in trust from others. Hence also the dividing up of Congress Poland into ten *Gouvernements*, and the uniting of civilian and military powers in the single person of Governor Kotzebue: an arrangement that amounted to the reign of martial law. As for the school system, it was trodden on in every possible way. In 1874 only seventeen students were allowed to matriculate in the whole Congress area. Nor did the introduction of Russian schools, poor in quality and few in number, solve any problem. Żeromski rightly called this whole experiment "Sisyphus labour". A single example of how it was received can be seen in the fact that while the Polish university in Warsaw had nearly 1300 students when it was abolished, there were only 445 seven years later.

Leaving on one side work of a destructive character, such as the purely political campaign conducted against the Uniate churches, the careful observer would have searched in vain at the end of our period for tangible evidence of any cultural service done by Tsardom to Poland. Barracks appeared everywhere, and a few administrative buildings. A few railways were built, mostly to serve the needs of defence. Not a single modern highway was constructed, nor was a single cultural institution founded. The growth of the capital was hampered in every way by the presence of the Citadel, and of the ring of forts attached to it. The neighbouring city of Łódź was not allowed municipal government, and its treasury was held in Russian hands. Though plans for sewage and waterworks were all worked out before 1890 by the English engineer Sir Henry Lindley, no such construction was permitted—in a city of 400,000 people! Warsaw was given one fine bridge, and the turn of the century saw the building of a School of Engineering; but the money for this was taken from the million-rouble gift offered by Poles to the young Tsar, and graciously returned by him to build a Russian institution in their midst.

How cynical was the attitude of those in authority to the national and spiritual feelings of a subject people was eloquently shown by the construction on the Central Square of Warsaw of a great Orthodox church and campanile, which not only by their style ruined the general

silhouette of the city as seen across the Vistula, but by their symbolism served as a daily reminder of foreign domination. In all fairness it must be said that many Russians disliked the whole policy and its methods. The system, says Masaryk, "developed in such an evil fashion that the best officials and administrators refused to serve in Poland".

The reader has already seen how often Polish statesmen had pinned their faith to the good-will and assistance of some foreign power. One time it was revolutionary France, another the Russia of Alexander I, and again one of the other European powers. As one historian has put it, people were addicted to "orientations": now Austrian, now French, now Russian. In the period with which we are dealing, this sort of thing was to take the form of playing off one of the partitioning Empires against another, in the hope that in some way Poland would then get her chance. It should be said, however, that to many Poles from Lelewel's day onward this policy was distasteful. It involved dependence on others instead of one's self, and it trusted too much to diplomacy. These patriots, some less but others more, took the firm line of "independence at all costs, and by the help of one's own arm". In other words, the spirit of the Democratic Manifesto of 1836 was not wholly allowed to die. As we shall see, it re-appeared in the 'eighties with the founding of the Polish League; and although its members were again to split into two camps, each one of these was to make a signal contribution to the subsequent work of liberation.

Meantime the accepted parole was Realism. The romantic aspirations and efforts, such as had failed in 1831 and 1864, were renounced once for all. Public opinion demanded a sober taking stock of the situation, a concentration on social and material development (the *enrichissez-vous* of Thiers), and the raising of the standard of living both in town and countryside—what came to be called "organic work". The popular slogan was "soberness"; and there is no doubt that the roots of all this were to be seen in the work done decades earlier by Marcinkowski and Raczyński in Poznań, not to mention the efforts of Wielopolski and Zamoyski in Central Poland. The implications of this new programme of action were very far-reaching. As noted at the outset, it meant turning one's back on political activity, the eschewing of the use of violence, and the acceptance *ad interim* of the prevailing subjection to Russia, and, by implication, to the other Empires as well. The story is told elsewhere of the struggle going on at this time with the régime of Bismarck in Prussia; as well as of the far milder conditions obtaining in southern Poland under

the Hapsburgs. From the declaration of the Stanczyks (1869), indeed from the moment of the granting of autonomy to the Poles by Vienna, the theory and practice of "triple loyalty" became the prevailing principle of Polish life. Without necessarily meaning assimilation, this did involve the acceptance by the Poles in each of the Partitions of the forms of private and public life prevailing in the Empire concerned. In effect, it meant that Poles would remain, even speaking their own tongue and enjoying certain of their own institutions; but that *Poland* would cease to be, not only as a name on the map, but as an idea and an ideal in the minds of its people.

We shall study at some length the forms that this triple loyalty took under Russian rule; but here it suffices to note that there were two main sources from which it drew its strength. On the one hand there was the marked infiltration from Western Europe of secularization currents: of the realism of Comte, of the implications of Darwinism, in general, of a cosmopolitan type of thought. We might call this the ideological source, and its net result was to convince many Poles of the futility of all romanticism, and of the inevitability implied in the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. The term given to this type of thought in Poland is "Warsaw Positivism". On the other hand there appeared a powerful economic argument. The process of industrialization, with the marked growth of city life, was moving swiftly eastward in Europe. A small beginning had been made with the founding of textile industries in Łódź in the 'twenties. This process was now to blossom out in full flower, notably after the opening up of the Russian markets as far away as Eastern Siberia in 1871. Here then was a great opportunity, which only a blind man could fail to see, to make common lot with Tsarist Russia, and smite the iron while it was hot. A classic expression of this was to be given in 1883 by the apostle of Positivism, Alexander Świętochowski:

Destiny has opened before us wide fields for conquests in business and industry. We have never mastered these sufficiently before, and now we can win here more certain victories than were those in which we have put our trust until now.

The results of this were being observed by Poland's neighbours. In 1899 the historian Rohrbach wrote these words: "Now for the first time the Poles can be certain that they will become a nation. . . . They have become unconquerable."

It is possible to see in this Realism a counsel of despair. Certainly the prospect that political alignments would permit the Poles again to

bring their claims to the attention of Europe was slight. France was reduced to helplessness, Britain was indifferent. As early as 1872 the three Emperors met in Berlin, with Bismarck as master of ceremonies. For ten years the Iron Chancellor had governed Prussia, and his views on Poland were well known. No matter what differences might arise between Berlin, St Petersburg and Vienna, in one respect they had to agree. Poland was to be kept out of sight. True, Bismarck could not hinder the more lenient policy of the Hapsburgs, dictated by the internal situation of the Dual Monarchy, but he could at least prevent things from going too far. How well he succeeded in his aims was seen at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when—in spite of every effort—the Poles could not get a hearing. On the other hand, he was helpless in the face of Russian resentment at what was happening in the Balkans. Austria was reaping where Russia had sown; and the relations between Vienna and St Petersburg were getting worse instead of better. It was on this fact, years later, that the hopes of many Poles came to rest. Meantime, however, nothing could be done. The three-day meeting of the emperors at Skierniewice, near Warsaw, in 1882, restored the semblance of amity, and Bismarck's anxieties were allayed—at least for a time.

One can understand that the policy of triple loyalty (in respect to Russia usually called "conciliation" (*ugoda*)) seemed to be more and more justified. Business and industry in Central Poland were flourishing as never before. The sons of the dispossessed landowners—in so far as they did not languish in Siberia—were now to be found in the professions, notably that of engineering. Railway connections were opening up with the East, and Warsaw began to develop the manufacturing of rolling-stock. Raw materials were at hand for the heavy industries (coal and iron in the Dombrowa area), or could be readily imported from abroad (raw cotton for the textile mills of Łódź). As a result (between 1873 and 1891) the output of mine, foundry and factory increased tenfold. The number of towns with more than 10,000 population rose in the same twenty years from seven to twenty-six. Warsaw was soon to reach a population of 800,000, and Łódź was nearing half a million. Prosperity raised its head where the level of living had been primitive, and the birthrate rose as a result. Industrial enterprise was thought of as "the promised land" of Reymont's novel, and many inexperienced people ventured their lives and their money, only to lose all they possessed. The later 'eighties saw a crisis of this kind, but the loss was made good in the next decade. Agriculture too shared in the general well-being, for the

presence of new markets in the industrial towns acted as a great stimulus.

There was a shadow side to the picture, obvious in the conditions of labour, long hours, poor wages, and bad housing. Much of the expansion was a mushroom growth, a sort of "wild west", in which everyone strove to get all he could, often at the expense of others. There were no controls; either external in the form of social legislation, or internal in the form of moral sanctions. After all, who cared? Most of the capital was German and Jewish, and the administration was far away in St Petersburg. Virtually the whole manufactured product was destined for export, and home consumption remained shamefully inadequate. For lack of guidance and education, the earners often wasted on worthless objects even what they had; and far too little was spent in promoting either solid creature comforts, or cultural amenities.

In view of these facts, no one will be surprised at the rise of Marxian Socialism among the workers. It was brought in by students, coming back from Russian universities. *Das Kapital* was published in Russian in 1873, and was soon in the hands of thousands of readers. It is notable that the three Emperors at their Berlin meeting had already discussed the danger to their peoples threatened by the new creed. Students of Russian history will remember what had been going on in the decade following the liberation of the serfs. Social reform led to political action—the creation of the *Zemstvo*. Unfortunately, reaction was not long in coming, and an unhappy ferment resulted. The same forces as in Poland were at work here, coming from Western Europe. They were engaged in a general attack on the two pillars of the old order—the throne and the altar. The spearhead of the attack is known as Nihilism.

Poland felt the repercussions, and in somewhat sharpened form. The grounds for this were both social and national. The founding of Polish Socialism is usually attributed to Ludwik Waryński, and he was soon an object of suspicion on the part of the police. An illegal organization arose, known as the *Proletariat*, which worked in close collaboration with Russian colleagues. A number of the members were arrested in the early 'eighties, and the famous trials of 1883-85 followed. Seven men were condemned to death, and shot in the following January on the famous "place of execution" between the Warsaw citadel and the bank of the Vistula. Some 200 had been in custody, some of them men who have since become national figures. Waryński himself died in the Schlüsselberg prison, probably of starvation.

The Socialist movement was thus driven under ground, but the work went on with special emphasis on education. The name of Bolesław Limanowski was becoming known; who was to live to his rooth year, and die as a Senator of a free Poland in 1935. Working in the late 'sixties as a day labourer, he got to know conditions in Warsaw, but soon moved over the Austrian frontier and began to write. In 1881 he helped to found a group called "The Polish People"; which was only a step to the founding a few years later, by Polish exiles in Paris, of a paper *The Clarion*, which was smuggled into the homeland. Socialism for him was not so much an instrument for winning a class struggle, as for rousing the masses to a consciousness of their national affinities.

A change was coming over the nation as a whole. The younger generation, which had not known the horrors of 1864, was beginning to question the whole outlook of the Realists. Time was doing its work, but so were the great tales of Sienkiewicz (*The Trilogy*) and the amazing canvasses of Matejko. So too was the policy of Bismarck. His expulsion of hard-working people in 1885, and his plans for colonization of Polish lands, roused the nation as a whole, irrespective of frontiers. Youth was resolved to be heard, and neither the arguings of a Świętochowski nor the warnings of the Cracow historians could satisfy them. Able advocates of "conciliation", like Spasowicz and Erazm Piltz, could urge their case in the finely edited weekly published in St Petersburg (*The Homeland*); but the new terror carried on by Governor-general Hurko and his fanatical School Administrator Apukhtin in Warsaw was even more eloquent. The year 1887 saw the founding in the capital of a journal *The Voice*, which took a straight line of opposition to triple loyalty in any form. Its editor, Jan Popławski, who had been arrested in the 'seventies, began a new period of activity, which was to make him the spiritual father of the party known as National Democracy, associated in our day with the name of Roman Dmowski. He turned the attention of Poles everywhere to the danger of thinking in terms of large areas to be gained on the eastern borders, while the oldest Polish lands, the cradle of the race, were being lost to the Germans in the west.

In a sense the year 1886 may be said to be a turning-point of the period under consideration. Urged on by a veteran of two insurrections, Zygmunt Miłkowski, a group of young Poles founded in Switzerland the *Polish League*, later to be called the *National League*. Its headquarters were in the castle of Rapperswil on the Lake of Zurich, and its purpose was to be twofold: the preparation of

Poles for open conflict in the name of liberation, and the gathering of a fund, to be the nucleus of a National Treasury. The literature which began to grow up around this theme is set forth in another chapter. Suffice it to say here that the days of indifference to the national cause were over, that the nation was beginning both to think and to feel, and that the time for some sort of action seemed to be at hand.

The international situation itself beckoned to the young patriots. Owing to disagreements over Bulgaria and the Balkans in general, Germany and Russia were on the verge of war in 1887. Austria was becoming more and more the unwilling partner, and Bismarck found it necessary to get his Re-insurance Treaty with St Petersburg. That this was already a patching up of a machine that refused to work, he conceded in effect by his readiness even to go to the point of provoking a Polish insurrection against Russia. He confided in the Italian premier Crispi in these terms:

Russia seems to be impregnable, but she is not that at all. Poland is her weak spot, and Austria has partisans in Poland. If one helped the Poles a little, they could rise in revolt and win their freedom. One might create a state with an Austrian Archduke as sovereign.

Few men have been more fertile in plotting mischief than Bismarck, but this must belong to his masterpieces. The truth was soon to be clear—he could not keep his three balls in the air at the same time any longer. The death of two German Emperors led to the dismissal of the Iron Chancellor, and to a change of front in Europe. Republican France and Tsarist Russia came together in 1891, and made their military convention in the following year. This fact did not in itself make the position of the Poles easier, since the French, anxious not to offend Russia, were compelled rather to cold-shoulder them. But the essential thing had happened; the collusion in criminal subjugation of Poland was over. The younger generation of Poles mentioned above were not slow to see this.

Led by students, among them young Dmowski, a resolute band of Warsaw people celebrated the centenary of the Constitution of 3 May 1791. This was the first demonstration in the name of Poland seen in the capital for a generation. Others followed, notably in 1894 the centenary of the Rising under Kościuszko. The gauntlet was thus thrown down—and not only in Warsaw, for similar manifestations took place in Lwów and elsewhere. Of course the Russian police reacted, the office of *The Voice* was closed, and the editors either

sent to gaol or deported; too late, however, to smother the fire that was beginning again to burn. Dmowski escaped to Lwów, and succeeded in getting his older colleague Popławski released to join him. The story of their founding there in 1895 the *All-Polish Review*, and of its educational work during a generation is told elsewhere. The creation of National Democracy as a party with a definite political programme took place in 1897.

The repressions under Hurko had included the making of the Polish Bank into a branch of the Russian State Bank in 1886, and the compulsory use of Russian in the offices of the Land Loans Company. How long the arm of the Russian police was, can be seen from the fact that, in connection with the attempt on the life of the Tsar the next year, two brothers Piłsudski, students in Kharkov, were arrested and sent to Siberia. One of them, Joseph, returned after five years' absence to Warsaw, just too late to take part in the 1891 demonstration. While in exile he had read and thought much, and convinced himself of the uses of Socialism in the national cause. From now on young Piłsudski became one of the chief leaders of the Socialist movement in Poland, and in 1893 one of the founders of the Polish Socialist Party. The next year saw the first number of *The Workman*, printed and published in secret as the organ of the party; and carried on only by the resolution of Piłsudski and his colleague Wojciechowski until the former was arrested in 1901. Thus we see how two men, Piłsudski in Central Poland addressing himself to the industrial workers in the name of Socialism, and Dmowski in Lwów, addressing himself to the intelligentsia (while not forgetting the peasant), were at work at last on the nation-wide task of education which could prepare men and women for whatever opportunity might bring. In a sense the two men were rivals, and they came in time to be political opponents, but there was room for both.

It is clear to-day that the work done by both was necessary, and that, in part at least, the one was the complement of the other in the work of liberating the nation. Piłsudski called himself a socialist, but was at heart a romanticist—a romanticist in the matter of ends and the way to reach them, but a realist when it came to considering means. With his mother's milk he had imbibed grief and indignation at the fate of the heroes of 1863, and he had schooled himself for years on Słowacki. Wherever he found them he was at war with oppressors—in particular with those he knew best, the agents of Tsardom. Following Lelewel, he mistrusted all dependence on others, and toiled to get his fellow-Poles to fight their own battle for freedom. The



march of 6 August 1914 was to be the consummation of twenty years of restless activity.

All this Dmowski viewed with concern, and opposed with resolution. He was the heir of Wielopolski and the tradition of conciliation. Disliking revolution in principle, he was never by nature fitted to be a man of action. Rather a student and a thinker, he watched with an eagle eye the trend of events in Europe, and saw at last in the 'nineties the approach of what he hoped for. Throughout his career he stood for collaboration with Russia, arguing that a victory of the latter over Germany (with the aid of the Western Democracies) would mean the uniting of Polish lands under the sceptre of the Tsar. This unification he regarded as the first goal to be attained. His high confidence in the superiority of his nation and its culture over the Russians (amounting almost to an obsession) made him certain that, once united, the Poles could themselves win through to liberation. This was why, when Pilsudski and others were working for revolution in 1904-5, Dmowski opposed it with all his power. By a curious chance the two men met, after years of separation, in the capital of Japan, then at war with Russia; the one to work for an understanding with the Japanese and create a diversion behind the Russian colossus, the other to discourage the whole project, and keep his people quiet. Both of them had the same final end in view, but Pilsudski put liberation first.

The death of Alexander III and the crowning of Nicholas II in 1894 promised a breathing-space. The young Tsar was reputed to be well disposed toward the Poles; and it meant much that he recalled not only Governor Hurko but also the fanatical apostle of Russian schools, Apukhtin. Hopes ran high, the number of Poles attending the Russian university in Warsaw began to grow, and the good years in business and industry became even better. As a sign of his good will Tsar Nicholas himself visited Warsaw with the Tsarina in 1897, and permitted the erection of a statue in the centre of the capital to the memory of Adam Mickiewicz. This visit of the Tsar has been called the high-water mark of "conciliation". In general the policy of triple loyalty had played itself out. Both the group centred around Dmowski and the *All-Polish Review*, and still more the Polish Socialist Party were openly opposed to it. And if there remained some who thought in terms of a special regard for Tsarist Russia, their dreams were rudely dispersed by the publication in 1899 of a secret memorial, written by the successor to Hurko, Prince Imeretinsky, for his government in St Petersburg. Pretending to be a friend of Poland,

and actually showing a certain clemency as governor-general, he prepared at the same time a document urging on the Tsar the complete incorporation of Polish lands into the Russian Empire, with the consequent loss of such elements of separatism as had still survived. This memorial, filched from the archives in St Petersburg by Socialist agents, was brought by Piłsudski to London and published there.

True, a certain section of the conciliationists remained firm. Though the new governor-general Chertkov treated the Poles as enemies of the Empire, though the use of the Russian language was being forced even into private business, though penalties for teaching Polish in private—hitherto inflicted only in the borderlands—were now extended to the Congress Kingdom, and though two Polish bishops were deported, these men maintained their “loyalty”; even going so far as to appear in a body at the unveiling of a statue of Catherine II in Vilna “as a sign of the freeing of the country from the Polish yoke”. Nevertheless, the general feeling of disgust that greeted this action was already far stronger than any triple loyalty. Both the National Democrats around Dmowski in Lwów, and the Polish Socialist Party with Piłsudski as leader, condemned it out of hand. In this one regard, though not agreeing as to general policy, they were united: and, when the news came of Piłsudski’s capture by the Russian police, Dmowski wrote in his *Review* the “story of a noble socialist”.

The time was soon to come, however, when this common front was to be put to a harder test. Encouraged by Berlin, the Russians plunged into the war with Japan. Nothing would suit better the plans of the German Kaiser, since the more Russia turned her attention to the Far East the better his own chances of getting his way in the Danubian lands and on the Vistula. The Poles found themselves in a difficult dilemma. Should they lend their support to the Tsar in this Manchurian adventure, or should they take the same line as 50 years before in the Crimean war? Was the long-awaited opportunity for action at hand, or was it not? Popular opinion in Warsaw did not hesitate; the news of Russian reverses in the Far East was received with rejoicing. On the other hand, wiser heads saw the graver danger from the West, and the Polish policy of Bülow, more ruthless even than Bismarck’s, gave good cause for concern. We have noted already how the two Polish leaders met by chance in Tokyo, and how the revolutionary Piłsudski failed in his mission.

The Warsaw conciliationists held a congress in Vienna, and decided, on the analogy of the Cracow Conservatives, to maintain their

policy of loyalty to the Tsar. With Archbishop Popiel as chairman, they formed an ambulance unit to serve in the campaign against Japan. In fury at this decision, the socialist *Workman* came out frankly for insurrection, condemning as traitors all who opposed this. That this charge was unfair was seen by the joint action of the National Democrats (*Endeks*) and the socialists in early November, when they summoned to Paris a congress, whose watchword was the self-determination of peoples. On the other hand, other *Endeks* took part in a congress of Russian gentry a fortnight later, and gave assurances that, in view of the threat of Prussia, they would oppose any breach of loyalty to the Tsar. Already they were too late. On 13 November a giant demonstration had taken place on Grzybowski Square in Warsaw. Shots were fired on the police, and the first blood in forty years was shed in the national cause.

The sentiment of the masses seemed to be for action. On the news of the rising led by Father Gapon in St Petersburg in the following January, a general strike broke out in Warsaw, and the whole city seemed to be going Red. But the ranks of Socialism were themselves divided. For years there had been two chief currents of thought and policy. One, led by Rosa Luxembourg, stood for the class war, and for strict co-operation with or even subordination to the movement in Russia. The other, led by Piłsudski and his colleagues, wanted to use Socialism as a means for rousing the workers in the cause of national emancipation. The formal break between the two groups had come as early as 1900. Rosa Luxembourg viewed all schemes for emancipation as nonsensical. In her doctor's dissertation (Zurich, 1898) she wrote: "Even the extremist fancy of a café politician cannot imagine to-day how the independence of Poland could emerge from a war between the German Empire and Russia." Others dared to hope for just this issue, however, and the Polish Socialist Party were already the activist element in the national cause. In fact their doings were becoming a source of constant anxiety among the landed aristocracy, whose fear of war and a repetition of 1864 played no small part in conditioning their line of action.

Events seemed to show that they were right. In April 1905 came the Tsar's Edict granting religious tolerance. Its results must have astonished many in Poland. Some 200,000 Uniates, who had been victims of the brutalities in the 'seventies, returned in a body to Catholicism. This mass movement was, of course, not as spontaneous as it looked to the outside world. Much quiet work had been going on for years among these rural communities: work in which the clergy,

guided by Bishop Jaczewski of Lublin, and picked laymen from Warsaw had collaborated. None the less it showed the prevailing sentiment, and the fact that the law permitted it was an argument in the hands of those who stood for the use of peaceful means, but eschewed appeals to violence. Needless to say, the Russian authorities had been aware of what was going on, and had used for years various means of repression—some of them reminiscent of the Prussian methods adopted to meet the school strike in Września.

In general the educational work going on for years in both country and town now began to bear fruit. At their communal meetings in December, 1904, many of the villages insisted on their right to discuss their problems in Polish, and hundreds of meetings passed resolutions to that effect. Many of the parish registries followed suit, and not a few of the schools. Student strikes took place in Warsaw, openly supported by public opinion. The result was the concession by the authorities in 1905 of the right to found private schools of all kinds, provided that the history and geography of Russia and the Russian language were taught in that tongue. These were distinct gains in the cultural field; but the extreme nationalists feared that people would be satisfied with this, and would refuse to go on to the real goal.

It was soon clear that these concessions were far from being an earnest of greater liberties. Every movement on the part of Russia to modify its Polish policy was watched with concern in Berlin. The press was already getting restless, and the meeting of the Kaiser with the Tsar in the Gulf of Finland in August was probably used to give a word of warning. The next month a new governor-general was appointed to Warsaw—Skallon, an official of German extraction, a Lutheran whose wife did not speak a word of Russian. In view of what was going on in Poznań, only the blind will refuse to see in this event another example of the collusion of autocrats in the oppression of a subject people. The new chief gathered about him a group of helpers—almost all Germans; and the German consul in Warsaw was in his counsels.

Such was the outlook on the Vistula, when the general strike in Russia compelled the Tsar to publish the famous October Manifesto. It promised all the reforms demanded a year earlier by the *Zemstvo* leaders—civil liberty and a constitution. The Duma was to be summoned with legislative powers; and an extended franchise was to make it representative of all the peoples of Russia. The news was acclaimed by a mighty throng assembled on Theatre Square in

Warsaw. They were fired on by the police, the square was cleared by mounted Cossacks, and many lives were lost. An insurrection seemed certain; but a Warsaw paper, controlled by *Endeks*, issued a special edition, announcing that the Prussian armies had crossed the frontier, and the threat was stayed. Wrath at the brutalities of Russia was side-tracked by fear of the still less trusted Prussian. For a time the populace seemed to lose its head. Those of the left paraded the streets with the Red Flag, and even made mock of the White Eagle. However, on 5 November the soberer citizens organized a mass procession, singing national hymns; and on the following day they sent to the governor-general a formal demand for autonomy. The reply was a decree, issued on 11 November, instituting martial law. With only short breaks, though with spells of moderation, this condition of affairs lasted on the Vistula until the outbreak of the world war.

At last the Poles of the Congress Kingdom were fairly divided into two groups: those who wanted swift action—an appeal to force—and those who stood for negotiation only, urging collaboration in and with the Duma. The former watched with interest the deeds of other national groups in the empire—Finns, Latvians, Lithuanians—and were resolved on extreme measures. Piłsudski and his colleague Montwiłł-Mirecki organized armed detachments, and a campaign of guerilla tactics was soon in full swing. The *Workman*, in an article on the Arming of the Proletariate, recalled the example of the Paris commune in 1871. Unmoved by the proclaiming of a constitution, and convinced that nothing good could come of the *Endek* tactics of asking for independence as a part of Russia, the Piłsudski group became a thorn in the side of all conciliationist Poles, no less than in that of the Russians. His most dramatic stroke was the attack carried out on a mail-train at Bezdany late in September 1908, in which a large sum of money was seized, to be used for Party purposes. Such deeds could in no way affect the course of events in Central Europe; but they did stir the imagination of large numbers of patriots, who rejoiced that there were again men in their midst who would do anything for the country, fearing neither the Tsar nor the devil. On the other hand, the majority of the intelligentsia viewed all this with concern. The press of the capital, with Świętochowski in the van, condemned all "lawlessness" out of hand, and the aristocracy everywhere refused to be impressed by "adventurers". Differences of opinion inside Socialist circles made united action impossible, and the vigilance of the Russian police grew. The *Workman* had to be evacuated to Cracow, and almost all the leaders of the movement

for action went into exile. The story of how they used their time in the years 1907-14 is told elsewhere.

The fact of the Duma, the presence in it of a strong Polish fraction elected by the nation (even the Wilno area returned only Polish deputies), and the current that was running in the direction of democratic institutions—these things were now the talk of the country. The demand was no longer for autonomy for the Vistula provinces, but for the kind of personal union that had existed between 1815 and 1831. As things turned out neither this demand nor the Duma itself had any chance of recognition. The functioning of the latter, even before it met, was so circumscribed by regulations that nothing worth while could be done. The Address to the Throne, which was the work chiefly of the *Cadet* party, was at once declared for the most part to be "inadmissible". Before long the burning question of the land emerged, and widely diverging groups resulted. The Duma wished to appeal to the country, and this was the signal for its dissolution on 21 July 1906.

The new premier Stolypin claimed to be a constitutionalist, and he summoned another Duma for the following March. Meantime he crushed openly all revolutionary activities, and, perhaps with Bismarck's example in his mind, himself initiated certain moderate reforms. On the other hand he had the franchise laws so altered as to make possible virtual control of the elections. In this, however, he was by no means successful; and the second Duma had more revolutionary elements in it than the first. The most notable group in it, says Pares, was that of the Polish deputies led by Roman Dmowski. Their skill in exploiting situations made them "the tongue that guided the wagon".

After a generation it is still not an easy matter to trace the stages by which the pioneers of the All-Polish movement had come by now to be ultra-conciliationist. In *Thoughts of a Modern Pole* (1902), Dmowski had virtually advised his people to take Prussia and Prussian methods as the model to follow in public affairs. To Poles their patriotism must become a religion. In her geographical position in Europe there was only one hope for the nation—the will to survive, a will that was to be expressed in the plainest way. This was a view of life and affairs far removed from the "Manifesto" of the Democratic Association, on which the Polish League had been founded in 1886. The little book of Zygmunt Balicki, *National Egoism*, had become the gospel of the Party. Critics of National Democracy were not slow to point out the similarity between these basic principles and the hated

Empire. Although this was not finally carried out until three years later, it was a straw which showed clearly how the wind was blowing. Over two-thirds of the inhabitants of the area were Roman Catholics, and indignation was strong, not only in Poland but also in other parts of the Catholic world. The Polish Club in the Duma made but a feeble protest, and even went so far as to prevent the Polish Circle in the Vienna Reichsrat from carrying out its plan for a far more vigorous demonstration.

The same year 1912 brought still another blow. The railway connecting Warsaw with the Austrian system leading to Vienna was in Polish hands; and it had been one of the bastions of the national economic and cultural life. It was now expropriated by the State, and 15,000 Polish families lost their livelihood. At a stroke of the pen grave harm had been done to the cause, and the revulsion was strong. It affected directly the political alignment. By his famous declaration at the initial neo-Slav meeting, "We accept a Slav policy without any reservations whatsoever", Dmowski had made many of his followers uneasy. This rising wave of repressions, over a number of years, did the rest. The founder and leader of the *Endek* party was left almost in isolation. Already in 1909 he had laid down his political mandate.

Meantime he had done one notable service, both to Poland and to Europe. His book, called in the original *Germany, Russia and the Polish Question*, appeared in French under the title *La Question Polonaise*, and is still to-day a document of first-rate importance on European politics. It set forth the grounds for National Democratic antipathy to Berlin, and for the alliance with Tsarist Russia. Echoing Poplawski, the author emphasized the blunders of past history when Poles were losing their western borders to the German *Drang nach Osten*, while seeking easier fields for colonization toward the Dnieper. It was this which had cost them their grip on the Baltic, their control of the mouth of the Vistula. Dmowski saw the future of Poland bound up with that of Russia; and cherished the idea of an independent Vistula land, inside the Russian Empire, which could then form a secure front against German aggression.

Biographers of Dmowski insist that, whereas up to 1906 he was engaged in educating his nation, from the time of his appearance in the Duma he entered the arena of international affairs. Thanks to him the Polish question could no longer be said to be "an internal affair" of any Empire, but returned again to its place in the Councils of Europe. This involved a readjustment by the nation of its whole

outlook: a fresh realization of the fact put so well by Wyspiański in the phrase: "A nation has no right to exist save as a state." Dmowski shared this view, but this makes it hard to absolve him from the charge of playing a sinister game. His co-operation in the Duma, and his declarations of friendship for Russia were only a means to an end, and were never sincere. Of a member of his party who seceded in annoyance at the neo-Slav flirtations, Dmowski said: "He wants to fight the Russians to-day, I prefer to wait till to-morrow."

Some of his critics deemed this a policy of despair, for all compromise is a confession of weakness. To others it seemed to be a very dangerous gamble, since no one could foresee what combinations of forces might appear on the European chessboard. In any case it had the weakness of advocating an extreme form of nationalism; and on the other hand, of seeming to depend too much on the goodwill of other powers. When, however, the question is asked, "What was the alternative?" the answer is not easy. Nothing could be hoped for from Berlin, so there remained the Hapsburgs in Vienna. Dmowski was never tired of heaping scorn on the Cracow Conservatives with their Austrian "orientation"; and an opportunity was given him for explaining his position at a meeting of political leaders of all parties that was held in Cracow in 1912. In a lengthy *exposé* of the general situation in Europe, he expressed the view that an opportunity was at hand for Poland, such as had not existed for decades. He foresaw war, but held the views to be fantastic of those who trusted Vienna or thought that any victory for Austria was possible. He was quite convinced that Berlin and the Hohenzollerns alone would dictate the terms of any peace in case of a victory of the Central Empires. At best the defeat of Russia could only mean a fresh partition of Poland, of a kind most disadvantageous. Polish policy should therefore favour the Russian cause in any struggle, though not necessarily out of love for Russia.

Whatever the verdict of history on this view may be, the fact remains that, on the outbreak of war at the end of July 1914, the vast majority of Poles remained loyal to the Tsar's cause and that of the Allies. In the Congress Kingdom, German and Austrian hopes of an insurrection in their favour were not fulfilled. As a result the task of the Russian General Staff in assembling its armies to fight on Polish soil was made much easier. Had the reverse been the case it may be doubted whether Russia could have won any notable successes at all in 1914.

To the casual observer it might seem that the "independence



movement" in the nation, which could be said to date from 1891, if not earlier, had achieved little or nothing. Only in the Prussian provinces was there anything like unity: elsewhere there existed sharp party cleavages. In Central Poland two main groups, radicals and conservatives, appeared. The latter were mostly conciliationists, the former almost uniformly for "active intervention". Representing mostly the "possessors", the Conservatives were fearful of revolution or war, on account of what might happen to the economic order. Conversely, the other group, being mostly of the exploited elements, sought the way to a juster social order in the direction of national emancipation. Once the premisses were accepted, either view might be justified. What really counted was that Poles had again begun to think, speak and act as Poles, and had shaken off both their fantastic romanticism and their passive indifference to politics. They were attracting the attention of the world by their achievements in letters, in the arts, in engineering: why should they remain silent in the most vital of all questions—that of personal and national liberties? It would be too much to say that the events of August 1914 found them ready. Nevertheless so much is true, that the work done by the preceding generation had borne much fruit. What had been inarticulate had now found expression; what had lain hidden and neglected was now before the eyes of all Europe.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PRUSSIAN POLAND, 1850-1914

ACCEPTED accounts of the fortunes of the Polish lands ruled by Prussia during the nineteenth century have been conceived mostly as an integral part of the history of the Hohenzollern kingdom, and then of the German Empire. They have followed the usual course of the Reaction, the New Era, the first and second phases of Bismarck's work, the interlude under Caprivi, and the return to the old policy under Hohenlohe and Buelow. Such an outline has some justification. It has the merit of reflecting the dictum of the pioneer Polish investigator of Prussian policy toward his countrymen a generation ago, Józef Buzek, viz. that the conditions of existence enjoyed by the Poles in Prussia were in the last analysis determined by everything else rather than by the needs and aspirations of the people concerned.

The surprising thing is that even Polish historians have been content to accept this scheme; moved doubtless by the spectacle of helplessness in which this part of their nation were caught. The present approach will be a different one. It is based on the conviction that no nation's destiny is determined from without, but that the essentials for living of every social group are its own thinking and achievement. To this the Poles in Prussia were no exception, nor, as the sequel will show, did they need to be. In the teeth of all the pressure which the high policy of Berlin exercised through its governors and their officials on the daily round of town and country, so great that betimes the inhabitants could do little else, if they were to survive at all, than search out ways and means of defence, the facts justify a better arrangement. We shall then distinguish the following periods:

(i) Rather more than a decade (1850-63), which at bottom is only the last phase of the situation created for the Polish people by the Insurrection of 1830-31.

(ii) A half-century of continuous, though not unbroken, progress toward consolidation of social and economic forces, which falls into three parts:

(a) A decade of preparation, 1863-73.

(b) A time of constructive organization, 1873-86.

(c) A generation of open and bitter conflict, of which the second half, after 1900, was more acute, at least until the fall of Buelow. This conflict was still in progress when the advent of war in 1914 changed the whole face of things.

The conditions under which the Poles in these areas lived were far from natural; yet, as we shall see, the forces that were most effective in their development were native rather than foreign. What will really concern us in this chapter is the thinking and the achievement, which sought to do for the nation what its own government would have been bound to do, had there been one.

Until the fateful year 1863, Polish leadership centred in Paris. The "emigration" there, as the reader knows, was composed of two camps: that of the left, springing from Lelewel and others, and the aristocrats of the Hotel Lambert, with Prince Czartoryski at their head. The presence of agents of both these groups in the eastern provinces of Prussia during the fifties was a constant source of anxiety to Berlin; and this was increased when the Powers fighting in the Crimea sought at all costs to bring Prussia in on their side. The initiatives to action, at this stage, still came from without the country; and their realization, be it observed, was thought of by all as the sole concern of the landed gentry.

The disaster of 1863-64 put an end to all this. The hopes of the Romantics were over, and the triumph was assured in the Polish world of the long-since maturing "realist" school. Its representatives in Poznań, Marcinkowski and Edward Raczyński, had set a memorable example a generation before. From now on the "emigration" was only a memory—Lelewel died in 1861, the Prince a year later. Leading and guidance, the planning as well as the execution, had now to be found at home. Actually the change to this new order in Prussian Poland may be dated from 1859, when Hipolyt Cegielski founded the *Poznań Daily*. Around this paper were soon gathered men of affairs, and of soundly democratic convictions, whose one and only purpose was the rescuing and nourishing of the national heritage. From now on, moreover, the view that any appeal to force or violence was likely to help the cause, ceased to find favour. The struggle for national survival was to be won, or lost, with other weapons.

The 'sixties were marked by a series of efforts, as yet not well-defined, to gather up the threads of common action that had been broken when the Polish League was dissolved in 1850. The first steps were now undertaken by the already well-known landowner, Maximilian Jackowski, to rouse the country people to a sense of their needs, and of the possibilities of satisfying them. The response, however,

was slight, and no momentum was achieved until the shock of the Kulturkampf threatened the convictions of every Polish family in the Marches. From 1873 began the building up of Jackowski's "peasant republic", as Laubert has called it. Parallel with all this went the rise of the Co-operative Movement, which had become a united enterprise as early as 1871, with Father Szamarzewski of Środa as Patron.

With these gains opens the third stage of the conflict, which lasted until the dismissal of the Iron Chancellor in 1890. Both the economic consolidation and the cultural awakening of the Poles in Prussia were now reaching fulfilment; in great part due to the assaults made on their patrimony by the authorities in Berlin. Two events stand out during this time. In 1879 the newly-formed Empire abandoned its policy of relative free-trade, and in the interests of its now developing industries, became protectionist. The role of Poznań, as the granary of the Reich, was soon seen to be one of first class importance, and the benefits accruing to the Polish farmer mounted accordingly. In 1886 came into being the Colonization Commission, with funds for the expropriation of estates owned by non-Germans; and from now on the centre of activity shifted from the cultural to the economic sphere. The struggle for very existence, thus launched, was soon broken by the interval of the Caprivi régime, only to be resumed and waged with increasing severity almost to the outbreak of the Great War. During the early years of this whole campaign the palm of leadership must be awarded to the layman, Jackowski; but after 1886 the new Patron of the Union of Co-operatives, Father Piotr Wawrzyniak, outshone the other, to become in time "the uncrowned king of Poznań". By now it was no longer a matter of one group or class, the landed gentry, waging the struggle. The whole nation was involved, and the leaders were the clergy.

One wonders to-day at the inability or unwillingness of the Prussian officials to admit that they were engaged in a losing battle. One reads with something like amusement the plans set forth in the two volumes of Ostland, published in 1912-13, for the completion of the mighty task of expropriating and/or assimilating their Polish subjects. The date suggested for the completion of it all was 1927. No one reckoned with the Poznań farmer, who, even in the worst days of the Great War, never lost his conviction that the Prussian overlord would tumble in ruins. An expression of this faith was the way in which the two leading figures, Jackowski in 1905 and Father Wawrzyniak in 1910, were laid to rest with honours a sovereign might envy.

Four years of revolt and unrest, of mingled expectations and dis-

appointments, were followed in 1850 by the triumph of the old order in Prussia, and the setting-in of reaction. In the Polish lands this latter was felt very keenly indeed. The attempt at self-help in the form of the League was dissolved after less than two years of activity. The landed gentry found themselves so crippled financially by what had happened that they were in despair. Many of them had mortgaged their estates heavily in the cause, apart from the losses entailed by the actual skirmishing. A decade of low prices for food-stuffs was on, and the bad harvests of 1853-55 made conditions still worse. The Polish Credit Society applied for permission to increase its resources, but was refused. On the other hand, a German Loan Bank *Posener Landschaft* was founded in 1858, whose business it was to extend needed credits to all "loyal" landowners. The net result of these factors was the compulsory selling-up of numbers of Polish estates, and the loss by 1860 of 125,000 hectares of land in Poznań alone.

Under the governorship of Graf Puttkammer in Poznań, zealously seconded by Police-director Baerensprung, violent acts of repression were carried out: the expulsion of all refugees, the rigid searching of suspected homes both in town and country, the making of German the official language for all public documents, with an extra charge of 50 per cent for Polish translations, and the obligatory use of German in all courts of criminal justice. Partly under the shock of these blows, but more still thanks to an admitted gerrymandering of the constituencies, the Poles came off very badly in the elections of 1855, returning only five members to the Diet. Only in the field of education could a hardly-beset people find some grain of comfort. Here the supervision was still in the hands of the clergy, and the charge can fairly be brought by German writers that an ultra-Protestant officialdom in high places allowed much harm to be done to the German cause. It permitted the assimilation by their more numerous Polish neighbours of not a few German Catholic immigrant-groups, notably the famous "Bambergers". Many schools that had been bi-confessional hitherto became Catholic only. In the long run this meant a weakening of the German position in the Borderlands. What happened during the 'fifties in Upper Silesia is of special interest. Here the German School-councillor, later Bishop, Bernard Bogedain dared to put into practice his view that to deprive young children of the right to have schooling in their mother-tongue was a breach of both human and divine laws. He introduced Polish where it had not been before, and provided for the training of teachers for this work. The results of this experiment on the Prussian interests were seen a generation later.

The outbreak of the Crimean war seemed to many Poles to offer a diversion, perhaps even a solution of their woes. On the one hand agents of both Parties in Paris were again active in Prussia; some of them, notably the Secessionist Group in London, planning another insurrection. Further, Polish legions were formed by the Hotel Lambert group to help the Allies in the Black Sea area. On the other hand, the acknowledged leader of the Poles in Prussia, Count Tytus Działyński, was approached in 1855 by the Russian military attaché in Berlin, and assured that the new Tsar was very well-disposed toward the Polish people. Acting on these assurances the Count made a journey to Paris to consult with the Polish leaders, but nothing came of it. The incident did not end there, for Director Baerensprung also went to Paris at the same time. Moving freely, even in Polish circles, he soon discovered what was going on. He made the needful reports to Berlin; but seeing possibilities of giving special proof of his zeal and ability he kept open his channels of information after going home. The moment came three years later, when he was able to intercept a message from London, calling on the Poles to organize a revolt. Now was the time. Annoyed by the milder attitude of Berlin toward the Poles, consequent on the proclaiming of the Regency, he went the length of circulating falsified Polish tracts—produced in his own office, hoping by their help to incriminate certain people. A few arrests were actually made; but the whole plot was disclosed by the Polish deputy Niegolewski in the Diet in 1859 and in 1860, to the evident confusion of official circles. The Director was recalled, and an admission of “impropriety” publicly made.

From now onwards, open and legal means for defending the national interests took the place of secret ones. The lead was given by the ex-schoolteacher, Hipolyt Cegielski, who on losing his post in education, had turned his attention to business. Seeing the dependence of his people on German industry and banking, he first founded a modest shop for making farm implements. This enterprise met so obvious a need that it grew beyond expectations, and in time became a power in the country. The founder soon made use of the greater freedom of the Regency to commence publishing in 1859 the *Poznań Daily*, whose single purpose was to promote the well-being of the nation, its speech and its culture. In this it differed from existing journals, which were Catholic first and Polish afterwards. The mind of the public was soon won by the protests made when the Poznanian Governor and Minister Schwerin in Berlin both laid themselves open technically to censure by their public use of the hated terms “province” of Poznanian,

and "province" of Warsaw. Another chance came, when an over-zealous gendarme in Obudno ordered the removal of the coat-of-arms of the Duchy of Poznań from public buildings. When the voice of deputy Niegolewski was raised in the Diet in these matters, the answer of Schwerin was prompt and clear: the terms of the Congress of Vienna had long since ceased to have validity, and the one thing that mattered in the Marches was Prussian law!

How little the Poles were ready to accept this oracle was shown in 1861 by the appearance of a pamphlet, written by the editor of the *Catholic Weekly*, Father Prusinowski. It was entitled "The Polish Language in the Grand Duchy of Poznań, in the Light of Prussian Law", and it made a big impression. Taking his stand on the events of 1815, the author declared the inalienable right of every people to its own speech. He recalled the policy of Frederick William IV, described in later years by Bismarck as "the error of a noble heart", and appealed to the clergy to rouse the people to a sense of their danger. How much the masses were stirred at the time would be hard to ascertain, but one thing seems clear. From now on began in Prussian Poland the swing over from what had been a liberal movement, led by laymen, to the strictly Catholic view of things that prevailed a generation later. This change was due partly to the influence of émigrés from Russia, notably the Koźmians; but even more to the growing threat of the secularist state, backed by the now popular theories of men like Darwin and Comte—all of which was unacceptable to Catholicism.

But the *Poznań Daily* editors had more constructive ends to serve; and in this they were ably seconded for Pomerania by the paper published in Chełmno, *On the Vistula*. They recalled the plans made in 1848 by the League, and they had before them the achievements in the field of agriculture of Russian Poland. It was resolved to realize at last a long-cherished dream, and found their own Agricultural Society, with a local union in each community. At the same time they created a Loan Bank, and made a start in founding village Co-operatives—in some cases jointly with Germans. In 1863 an Industrial Bank was also founded. A year later the scope of the Agricultural Society was extended, and in 1873 the local unions were brought closer together by their very competent organizer Jackowski. Meantime the year 1870 saw the opening of a short-lived Agricultural College near Poznań. In the next year the scattered Co-operatives were joined together in a single Union; and after a period of vegetation this agency was made effective for work in 1886 by the creation of the Union of Co-operatives Bank, which has been for half a century one

of the pillars of society in Western Poland. As late as 1878 there were only 73 Co-operatives, with 14,500 members. By 1900 the number had nearly doubled, and in 1910 it was 265. From a turnover in 1891 of 15 million marks, the Bank grew to show in 1910 the sum of 208 millions. Of course nothing of this could be foreseen by the early pioneers, whose one wish was to free the farmer, as well as the small tradesman and artisan, from utter dependence on German and Jewish money interests.

Meantime a storm had been gathering. In 1862 Otto von Bismarck had been called by his almost despairing sovereign to the task of taming the unruly democratic elements in Prussian public life. Nine tumultuous years were to follow, in which the Minister gambled with fate and with human factors as few national leaders have ever done. We can look only at what concerned the Polish Marches, and of this alone an adequate account would fill a book. At once came the insurrection of 1863 in Warsaw, and a tightening of the reins of control by the new Governor Horn in Poznań resulted. A pupil of Flottwell, he was a splendid type of citizen, and a thorough-going administrator. His task was no sinecure, for one of the "heroes" of the revolt was the Poznań-born Langiewicz, and the sympathy of the Poles was general. In spite of the strict watch kept on the frontier, dictated by good-will to Tsardom, groups of eager volunteers slipped through to help in the fray. The High-school at Trzemeszno was closed, and then dissolved altogether, owing to the number of youths thus defying the law. At the end of April the Działyński Palace in Poznań, said to be the home of a conspiracy, was raided by the police, and a number of important people arrested. A huge trial followed in Berlin, and those involved were condemned to death. On the outbreak of the Austrian war, two years later, they were released.

Meantime Poles remembered that the year 1863 was the millennium of the coming of Christianity to their land, and they would have been glad to celebrate it suitably. Eyes were turned still more on religious matters the next year, when the veteran Archbishop Przyłuski completed half-a-century of service. Who would succeed him? Negotiations were soon under way, the tangled course of which has been admirably shown by Selchow. Many interests were at stake. Much as Bismarck hated the Ultramontanes, he was ready to accept their chief, Bishop Kettler of Mainz, for the post, since he was at least a German. But that dignitary would not consider the call, so the choice of the Vatican fell on a gifted prelate of Polish blood, who had served most of his life in Western Europe and was even reputed to have forgotten



his mother-tongue, Count Ledóchowski. The approval of Berlin came in June 1865, and the following April saw the entry of the new archbishop into Poznań. Within a month he had thrown cold water on the hopes of many enthusiasts by a round robin, advising his clergy to keep clear of all political activities. In August he roused a storm of protest by forbidding the Polish hymn "Boże coś Polskę" to be sung in the churches. In all this he showed himself the true churchman—*civis Romanus, subditus Borussiae*; whose resolve it was to keep his office above national controversies, and to wage no wars unless in defence of the faith. The testing came in 1867, when all priests received admonitions not to take part in the election campaign. The cup of Polish indignation was full. Only the *Catholic Weekly* defended the prelate's action, insisting that he could not do otherwise. But this line of policy was becoming daily more difficult to maintain, in view of the consistent attack being made by Governor Horn on the church schools. He got the Jesuit school of Father Koźmian closed, and then went on to secure the release of all priests from the post of inspector. This kind of thing could not but play into the hands of the archbishop; and by 1869 the latter had so confirmed the hold of the clergy over the Polish Marches, that most people were ready to accept the struggle for the Faith as the surest way of winning the battle for the nation.

Meanwhile the war had been fought with Austria, and out of it came a more liberal régime for the Poles in Galicia. The first fruit in Prussia was a blow at any claims the Poles there may still have cherished in regard to separate status. A law was passed incorporating the two provinces into the North German Federation. (Ten years later "Prussia" was to be divided into "East" and "West", so that the number was now three.) In protest against this, the Polish deputies resigned their mandates, but it availed nothing. In this connection the first of Bismarck's great "Poland" speeches was delivered (the second if one counts the speech of February 1863), in which he took his stand on the Grolman Memorial of 1831, and suggested the lines of policy to be taken later. How far he was actually aware of "the Polish menace" at this time is not clear; but the plain speaking of Governor Horn's reports could enlighten him. In any case "the smith of the German empire" had weightier matters in hand; and while he was engaged in these, the course of events was making the solution of the problem in the Marches harder. A new law provided for the general right of migration within the Kingdom, and in 1869 a second statute opened to all the doors of industry, and with it of urban settlement. These privileges were a boon to the fast-growing

Polish villages, and mark the dawning of new conditions which we must observe in detail.

The strength of Polish Catholicism had always been found in the open country. Such towns and cities as the Marches possessed were mostly small, and were largely German and Jewish in population. Once flourishing Polish centres, they had long since fallen on evil days, and had never recovered. As business and industry developed in Westphalia many German and still more Jewish tradesmen from the East began to move thither. Their places in the towns were taken by the younger Poles, coming from the land. Of Jews there were still 3.91 per cent in Poznań in 1871, but by 1905 only 1.5 per cent. The population trend is shown by the following table, the figures being for religion, not for nationality:

	1849	1871
Protestants	409,286	508,060
Catholics	847,670	1,000,461
Jews	76,437	61,437

Even more eloquent of what was going on are the figures for the *Gutsbezirke* of Poznań, the big estates:

	1871	1885	1895
Germans	63,848	61,627	57,662
Poles	291,958	328,340	334,429

revealing a steady decline on the one hand, with a corresponding increase on the other. The Catholics were 62.5 per cent of the whole in 1867 in Poznań, but 67.1 per cent in 1895. The census of 1910, on the basis of nationality, made the Poles 71.3 per cent of the total. In Pomerania this trend was not nearly so marked; the Germans numbered in 1890 about two-thirds of the population. The figures for that year were:

Germans	1,097,953
Poles (and Kashubes)	583,052

The ultimate strength of any nation or state lies in its people, and the trend of population was seen even in Bismarck's day to deserve watching. Both Poles and Germans kept on emigrating from the Borderland, not a few of them to the New World; but the difference was that the places of departing Germans were taken, as already stated, by Poles. "In this economic strengthening of the Polish element", says Laubert, "lay the chief danger. It needed the genius of a Bismarck to recognize this fact."

A series of other developments were to draw attention to the Polish areas during the 'sixties, and to make what should have been a bulwark of Prussia into a danger-spot. First, the construction of the railway from Berlin to Poznań and Bromberg (Bydgoszcz), with an extension thence to Września, and of the line from Leszno to Ostrów. This vast improvement in communications opened up markets, inaccessible before. But it also made easier population movements, facilitating in fact the emigration that was not desired. Further, it made the danger from possible invasion more acute. To meet this the German garrison in Poznań was strengthened. Horn welcomed the soldiers with these words: "With German troops comes also the German mentality, German order, and German custom." Nor should the extension of the work and influence of the United Church of Prussia (Protestant) be omitted; in which movement the help of the Home Missionary Society, the Gustav Adolf Verein, was of no small account. Finally, it was not likely that the Governor, a pupil of Flottwell, would forget the advantage to be won from a steady purchasing of Polish estates for German settlers. "A very practical mode of Germanization", he called it. The Polish gentry were still unable to help themselves economically, and between 1861 and 1885 almost 300,000 hectares of land were lost.

Historians will never agree who was the "aggressor" in the struggle that was now to be unfolded, of which the first phase was cultural, the second economic. The attention of the world was caught by the fight for Culture, and in view of the pamphlet of 1861 mentioned above, it may be claimed that the Poles took the offensive. Certain it is that, when the Empire had been achieved at Versailles, and the Chancellor was at last free to devote himself to Prussia's "greatest problem" (the phrase is Buelow's, and of a later generation), he saw at once how the Catholic Section of the Ministry of Education had been exploited by the Poles for a generation to build up what looked very like "a state within a state", under the eyes of Berlin—not a hundred miles away. Hence his promptness in abolishing the offending institutions in July 1871, and his demand for the expulsion of all aliens from the Marches. To realize what this challenge meant, we must go back for a moment, and look at the march of events on a wider canvas.

It was Bismarck's misfortune, when he took up his task in 1862, to inherit all the fateful achievements of the past. It was his further misfortune, though perhaps his own choice, to be so occupied for almost a decade with the German Question, that he could not deal properly with anything else. Not that he was indifferent, for few

things in Bismarck's life exercised him so much as the Polish problem. This non-German and non-Protestant people, firmly settled for a millennium in the very heart of Europe, and in the bosom of what Germans had long been taught to regard as their patrimony, could neither be got rid of nor assimilated. His years in St Petersburg had taught Bismarck what his fellow-Germans were unwilling to admit: that, whatever might separate Prussia and Russia, one necessity bound them together—the need of a common front against any and every plan for a restored Poland. The Partitions had to be maintained at all costs. This fact explains his famous warning of 1854, when he told his contemporaries who were demanding war, that any suggestion of a rehabilitated Poland would mean what for Prussia amounted to suicide, viz. the giving up of all lands inhabited by Poles, including Upper Silesia. (Exactly the thing that happened in 1918!) It explains his conclusion of the Alvensleben Convention early in 1863, in the teeth of popular hostility. Finally, this same anxiety was to be the prime factor in his decision to embark on the *Kulturkampf*. Twice in later years did he make this clear, notably in his Jena declaration in 1892: "We could have got along very well without the whole Fight for Culture, had not the Polish question been a part of it."

Why did the Chancellor venture on this voyage in troubled waters at all? The answer may be as follows. He had watched with concern the resurgence of "Ultramontanism" in Central Europe from 1840 onwards. Special events served to implement this advance: the *Concordat* with Austria of 1855, the Papal Bull *Quanta Cura* of 1864, the proceedings of the Vatican Council in 1870, and the re-founding of the Centrum Party in the new *Reich*. It looked to him as though the effect of all these was concentrated in Poznań, and symptomized by the accession of Ledóchowski to a post always thought of by Poles as the Primacy of Poland. A quite obvious threat of a Poznań-Vienna-Rome "axis", which in case of general trouble could certainly count on France!

To the Prussian statesman's dislike for the Roman Church and its clergy was added a no less thoroughgoing aversion to and contempt for the Polish gentry—the *szlachta*. If he remembered the sight of the Silesian priest, Father Szafranek, "standing" in parliament in 1848, when forbidden by his bishop to "sit", he also never forgot the figure of Mierosławski, clad in his national costume, and acclaimed by the populace of Berlin on his release from the Moabit prison. This feeling may well have helped him to an unfounded confidence in the loyalties of the Polish peasant-farmer, whose bravery in the Franco-Prussian war he was fond of recalling. Holding these people to be as docile

as his own German *Bauer*, he remained too long unaware of the subtle but momentous changes that had come over the rural world of Central Europe in a single generation. In these changes the common school and the popular press were the determining factors and they did their work well.

The creation of the *Reich* at Versailles freed the Chancellor for work inside the realm, and in January 1872 the offensive against the Church began. Falk was appointed Minister of Education in the place of the too weak Muhler. The Catholic Section was abolished. The great speech of 9 February told the House, "we shall not go to Canossa". Four days later came the letter to the Minister of the Interior, Eulenburg, demanding the restoration of German in the schools and the law-courts, a wiser choice of officials for the work in the Eastern Marches, and the distributing of Polish recruits among German regiments, so as to facilitate the task of germanization. The same day saw the School Control Law passed by the Diet, and a month later it was confirmed by the Upper House. A new spirit was abroad in the German world, and things were now possible that could not have been attempted a decade earlier. The state was now wholly in charge of education, the clergy as inspectors were no longer tolerated. In October German was ordained for the Middle Schools, even for the teaching of religion, Polish being allowed only in three institutions. A year later the edict of Horn's successor, Governor Guenther, made German the medium of instruction for all elementary schools, save for religion and singing. In May 1874 German was declared the language of instruction for all teaching, Polish to be tolerated only where no other tongue was understood! This state of things was extended in 1876 to all public offices, and in the next year to the courts of justice. Polish documents, and the use of that tongue in the witness-box could be permitted only by the express will of the sovereign. The germanizing of numerous place-names was one special feature of this campaign.

Outspoken protests against these measures from the head of the diocese went unheeded. When the archbishop went on to appeal to his people, enjoining passive resistance, fines and other penalties were the result. Two bishops were arrested; and on 4 February 1874 Ledóchowski himself was taken into custody. He spent two years in prison in Ostrów. Then he was deposed, and retired to Rome. For twelve years the see was vacant.

Along with these rulings for the defence of German interests went another decision of Berlin. It was the first of the famous *Ausnahms-*

*gesetze*—discriminatory laws; which were to be levelled in plenty at non-German elements in the coming years. Poznan was excluded from the general scheme carried out after 1872 for the setting up of modern machinery of local self-government. The Poles of Prussia were to be ruled as before, by district commissioners, with the help of the gendarmes. What is more, the whole system was intensified, to make it more effective. When added to the peculiarly Prussian three-class suffrage, these new ordinances produced a state of things strongly resembling that to be found in colonial possessions. (This discrimination was not removed till 1889.)

The real opposition that now asserted itself came of course from the people themselves. Ten years of spade-work, done with the utmost devotion and skill by Jackowski—himself a farmer, were bearing fruit. What people had heard of as threatening them, but did not really believe in, was now upon them. Plain truths had been written for them by Jackowski in two pamphlets, published in 1870; but too few read them at the time. "Our education", said the author, "has done too little in the way of nurturing the spirit of work." If the admonition found men's minds less receptive in 1870, the case was different now. Bismarck's move had struck home in every Polish family in the country. The shock told, and the consolidation of the local Farmers' Circles into a single Agricultural Federation was the work of a few weeks. Their number rose in four years to 105, and by the outbreak of the Great War they were nearly 300. During the early years all of them were watched over in person by their Patron. They held monthly meetings, and a yearly Congress. The members read diligently *The Farmer's Counsellor*, as if it were the oracle of Heaven. When the Iron Chancellor's second move came in 1885-86, the nation was ready for it.

We have shown how nearly every step taken to modernize the conditions of living in Prussia helped on the Polish cause. As industrial expansion continued, the price of all farm products rose steadily. The Polish lands increased their acreage of potatoes—itsself a mark of well-being—and began to cultivate the sugar-beet in large quantities. The industrialization of farm methods was in progress, together with a change in the level of the intelligence devoted to them. The pioneering work of Cegielski and others had set a good example, and was being followed. Now came the organization of the sale of cattle, timber and grain, so as to rescue the farmer from the claws of the middle-man, and keep the profits in the lap of the community. When the Union of Co-operatives Bank came into existence in 1886, it

found a remunerative field for action. Not that everything was ideal—far from it. A series of articles appearing in the *Poznań Courier* in 1880, complained that the city in winter was little else than a meeting-place for the landed gentry. Few Poles lived there, no one held a "salon", there were no centres of social or cultural life, no atmosphere like that of a provincial capital. Further, Polish shops were of little account, they were not supported as they should have been. Arts and crafts were still in swaddling clothes.

Pomerania was even worse off in this respect, since it had no gathering place that could be regarded as central. The lead had been taken in the 'sixties by Chełmno, but the main railway line passed this picturesque old city by; so in 1867 the decision was taken to make Toruń the chief place of meeting, and the *Toruń Gazette* was founded. A new Bank had existed since the previous year, and the small beginnings of rural organization which had gone forward on lines similar to those in Poznań had now a focus point. The lower Vistula area found its leader during the *Kulturkampf* in Bishop Marwicz of Pelplin, and the interest of the masses in what was going on was shown by the fact that a primer published by Ignacy Lyszkowski sold 70,000 copies in a short time. Toruń could not aspire to rival Poznań, but from 1875 it did possess its own Scientific Society, which became permanent. In general all the towns in the East Marches advanced faster in the 'eighties. In 1867 only 16.5 per cent of the people of Poznań lived by trade and 28.6 per cent by industry. By 1895 the respective figures were 21.6 and 42.5 per cent.

The second move of Bismarck came in 1885-86. For some time he had shown a willingness to meet the new Pope, Leo XIII, in seeking a compromise on the religious issue; but this made it the more necessary to shift the struggle with the Poles to another field. Relations with Russia were far from good, and a firmer hold on the lower Vistula area seemed to be the first demand of the hour. What is more, the question which had formerly been a Prussian one, could now be held to concern all Germany. The census showed that there were too many people in the two provinces who did not belong there; so Europe was startled by an order in 1885 expelling over 35,000 aliens from their homes. Some of them had been there for a generation, but it mattered not. The firm hand was necessary, as a gesture to Russia. Unfortunately St Petersburg was not impressed, and the whole move brought only undesired publicity without solving anything. The German ambassador on the Neva called it "unwise, and needlessly cruel". In any case it was only a prelude.

The master-stroke came in 1886. A commission for colonization was set up, with a fund of 100,000,000 marks for the purchase of Polish estates, and the settling on them of loyal farmers. "Germans, but with German wives, not Polish ones", was Bismarck's phrase. Flottwell's plans were now to be realized on a grand scale. Towns like Gniezno were to be surrounded with a ring of German settlers, so that Polish and Jewish business would be stifled. The whole German nation was called on to make the scheme a success. Other measures went with it. In July the privilege of "patronage" was abolished, by which communities had chosen their own teachers. These were now to be appointed from above. Again, continuation schools were resolved on for all towns of more than 2000 people, at which, under severe penalties, compulsory attendance in the evening up to the age of eighteen was enjoined. Finally, the German prelate, Dr Dinder of Königsberg, was appointed to the see of Poznań.

Truly an *annus terribilis*! Yet things might have been worse. The net result of the Commission was the loss of a further 50,000 hectares during five years, but then no more. Learning from their rulers, the Poles had now the means for an offensive, and they proceeded to buy even more than they sold. An appeal on the part of the landed gentry to their Austrian compatriots resulted, after long conferences, in the creation of a Land Bank; but there was a difference of opinion as to how wide its scope should be. In the sequel it was restricted to the single task of assisting in the parcellation schemes. This left the wider field of public banking still untouched, and the Union of Co-operatives could take up the challenge. For years Father Wawrzyniak of Mogilno had watched the way these societies had vegetated, and he had come to fairly clear conclusions as to the reason why. There was too little discipline; above all there was no centralized control, no proper executive. Without these no enterprise could function. The new Bank provided what was needed. Wawrzyniak showed his genius by laying down as cardinal principles that all politics must be excluded rigorously from the institution, and that no loans or advances of any kind should be made to help anyone without funds in hand to cover them. The capacity of the Bank for public service was thus made dependent on the thrift of the community. People realized at once the point of this, and the response was general. As a "mutual" association, the new agency possessed a dynamic that neither a private nor a state institution could command. A technical difficulty as to the yearly auditing of the books threatened to cause disruption, but after two years of negotiation with Berlin the right of



the Poles to appoint their own auditors was conceded. The way was now clear.

Nevertheless it was a godsend for all concerned that the breathing-spell of the Caprivi régime came when it did; the more so as the early 'nineties were a time of financial stress. No existing laws were revoked, it is true, but the use of Polish for teaching certain subjects was winked at. What is more, an opportunity was now afforded for the Polish Club in the Reichstag to seek for a basis of understanding. Since 1867 political activities had been as good as suspended, had in fact been frowned upon by the common people as a trap rather than a help. Occasional utterances of their deputies in the Diet and Reichstag had found a response, notably that of Father Stablewski in 1879, when he delivered a memorable speech on the state of church life in Poznań. Now, however, a deputation of the Polish nobility waited on the new Emperor in 1890, to wish him well; and the leader of the Club, Józef Kościelski, was received by Caprivi himself. The Poles lent their support to the new naval policy, and in 1893 cast their votes for the proposed military credits. The goodwill of the Government had been evidenced by the appointment of Father Stablewski to the archepiscopal see, as well as by other gestures. Whether all this was caused by the growing fear of trouble with Russia (the Tsar had met the French President at Kronstadt), need not detain us. But the good faith of Berlin was not recognized by the Polish masses, and on sensing this fact Kościelski resigned. He rehabilitated himself, however, in the eyes of his fellows, by his speech at the Lwów exhibition in the autumn of 1894, in which he asserted again the united will of all Poles in respect to political independence. It is a matter of history how, with the crowning of a new Tsar, and the formal restoring of good relations between William II and Bismarck, the years of conciliation ended. The old order was restored. Poznań leaders recalled the slogan of the *Daily* in 1865, "Let's not fool ourselves!", and settled down again to continue their struggle.

Thus do we enter on the last phase of the subjection of the Poles in Prussia. Both parties to the campaign, now to be resumed, knew very well that quarter could neither be asked nor given. The rulers looked the stronger; but their assault was from without, and history shows that a nation can really be attacked only from within. All the same the German minority in the Marches was a strong one, and its voice was soon to be heard, as we shall see. The Poles had, indeed, certain things in their favour. There was the growing tension in the international field. There was the undeniable awakening of the more than

a million Poles in Upper Silesia, a welcome accession of strength. Most important of all, there was the superb solidarity of their own ranks, both urban and rural. The German world, on the other hand, revealed a mounting consciousness of a national mission, which saw in Polish aspirations a direct obstacle. Add to these things the pressure of population in a crowded Europe, and the desperate nature of the conflict to be waged is clear.

On the surface things looked even darker for the Poles than they were: not least because, after the Cinderella treatment of the Marches for so long, the Berlin authorities began in the late 'nineties to spend money there. This did not mean the vote of a second 100,000,000 marks in 1898 for settlement, nor the adding of another 150,000,000 four years later, but spending public money upon respectable buildings and other improvements. Until now only old structures had been used for offices and even for schools—chiefly monasteries; but at last a campaign of expenditure began. The interest of the All Highest in what was going on was shown by the visit of the Imperial Family to Poznań in 1902. Responding to speeches of welcome, the Emperor brought one bit of cheer to the city, when he announced that the forts which had so long hindered the normal growth of Poznań were to be demolished. That year saw the opening of the Emperor William Library in Poznań, the next the founding—in lieu of the forbidden university—of the Academy, the year 1904 the opening of the Emperor Frederick Museum. In due course the mighty Castle was built, and in 1910 the State Theatre was completed. Other cities saw similar improvements. Bydgoszcz got a library and a theatre, Toruń a theatre, and the near-by German city of Danzig a School of Engineering. Lending libraries were established in the larger towns, and improved railway connections were designed to make them more helpful as centres of social and cultural life. Attention was also given to specific agencies. To the one and only "Historical Society for the Province of Posen", dating from 1885, there were now added a "German Society for Arts and Sciences", and city museums in both Toruń and Grudziądz. Such things pointed to a new confidence in regard to the East, and a resolve to consolidate the German heritage there. Expression of this fact was given in more than one public utterance, notably by the Emperor himself in 1905 in Gniezno: "To work here in the east is a duty to the Fatherland. And just as the picket dare not flinch from his post, so the Germans dare not withdraw from the Marches!" Salary supplements had long since been provided for civil servants, to help to keep them there.

Meantime a new voice was making itself heard, that of the Germans resident in Poznań and Pomerania. In the former they were a minority, but in the latter the position was reversed. In general they were in a difficult situation, since the landowners—known as *Junker*, who provided the political leadership, had never been popular in Germany. The Catholic part of the population was always in danger of denationalization through intermarriage with their Polish neighbours, and the hardness of the gentry in refusing to pay a decent wage to their workers helped on a growing emigration to the industrial areas of the west. Since the elements thus migrating were usually the more robust and enterprising ones, the outlook was far from cheerful.

Knowing all this, but at the same time anxious to do him proper homage for past services, two delegations of Germans from Poznań and Pomerania visited Bismarck at Varzin in the autumn of 1894. Out of these visits grew what came to be called from 1899 the *Deutscher Ostmarkenverein*, the Union for Defence of the Eastern Marches. Prime movers in this enterprise were three men—Hannemann, Kennemann and Tiedemann, the last-named being the Governor of West Prussia who had drafted the Colonization Plan in 1886. From the initials of their names sprang the term by which this ultra-nationalist, even chauvinist organization came to be known, *Hakatism*. The new agency was far from finding favour in all German circles. People realized that such a society would only provoke fiercer opposition from the other side. Further, it was not felt desirable to have alongside the proper administration a second and private body, to tell them what to do, and to censure them if they did not do it. Within a few years, this very situation was to arise, when the "extermination" policy of Buelow could be traced directly to the counsellors of the very active *Verein*.

The term *ausrotten* (exterminate) (used first by the philosopher Hartmann in this connection) was indeed disclaimed by Bismarck; and it was doubtless a weakness in German strategy that an agreement could not be reached as to what precisely the end in view was. But no one who studies with any care the course of events under Buelow after 1900 can be in any sort of doubt. In 1901 the exclusive use of German in all schools was confirmed, and with no exceptions for religion. To this the Polish reply was the first of a long series of school strikes, culminating in 1906. Then came the statute of 1904, laming the work of the Polish self-help agencies. The building of any cottage or barn on a plot of land was forbidden, unless to replace one that had been there before. This was to stop new holdings, and it compelled

the famous Drzymała to buy a gipsy caravan and live in it with his family. In 1908 came the "muzzle" decrees; by which it was made unlawful to hold any meeting in Polish in communities with less than 60 per cent Polish population. The by-laws of all societies were to be handed in in German, and no discussions were to go on in Polish for the future, unless at election time. A subsidy was granted to the town of Katowice in Upper Silesia to help build the new theatre, but on the express condition that no Polish should ever be heard on the stage!

The same year (1908) saw definite provision, for the first time, for the compulsory expropriation of land—70,000 hectares were to be bought, and for this 50,000,000 marks were provided. (True, nothing was done to carry this out, till in 1911 four estates were taken over.) A further 125,000,000 marks was also voted for the general fund, and in the year before the war broke out the colossal sum of 525,000,000 marks was added, bringing the grand total to a billion. Truly, as Tacitus said, no middle way is possible for those who seek empire! To clinch matters, an edict was now issued reserving for the state the first right of purchase, whenever any property should come up for sale.

On closer examination the Act of 1913 looks rather like a counsel of despair. Laubert has assembled the results of the whole enterprise up to 1912, and they show a loss to the Germans rather than a gain. As early as 1905 the Poles had bought from their opponents 50,000 hectares more than they lost to them. For years the Commission had only been able to buy from German proprietors, and for the most part in order to keep the property from getting into Polish hands. Now, an unlooked-for accompaniment of this scramble for land, although a child might have foreseen it, was a fearful rise in prices. What could be bought for 568 marks per unit in 1886 was costing as high as 1383 marks twenty years later. No wonder many a German was ready to sell out at that price! Such conditions were of course unhealthy, but they did bring with them many useful improvements, in the way of drainage schemes, the planting of more orchards, the wider use of fertilizers, intenser tillage, and breeding of pure-bred cattle. The less savoury side of it was an orgy of land-speculation. At this game the Poles proved to be quite as clever as the Germans, and not less unscrupulous in methods used. The palm among them was held by a certain Biedermann, who had won a name as the publisher of *Praca* (Labour), a weekly that was Polish through and through, but aimed rather to amuse people than to instruct them. It gave much attention to the land issue, and began later on to publish the famous "Black

List", containing the names of all who sold land anywhere to other than their own compatriots. Biedermann had his land agency, under another name, and he soon began to play an old trick. He would set up straw men to offer high prices to German proprietors and as soon as he got an option, would see that the Colonization Commission overbid him to save it. Of course he reaped a fair profit on every such deal until the thing was exposed. He became a public nuisance before his firm collapsed, but Bernhard can write of him that he won more land for the Poles than any bank did.

Not the battle for the land, however, the details of which neither party wanted noised abroad, but cultural issues drew the attention of the whole world at this time to Polish Prussia—notably the already mentioned school strikes. The children refused to attend schools where they were not allowed to say the Lord's Prayer in their own tongue. The peak of the conflict was reached in 1906 with Września as the centre. The issue turned on the right of the teacher to inflict bodily punishment and 47,000 children were involved. The strike went on for eight months. By inflicting severe penalties the authorities won in the end; but it was a Pyrrhic victory. The Poles had the good fortune to have as champion of their cause the internationally famous Henryk Sienkiewicz, who brought the whole matter before the tribunal of European opinion. The Kaiser's telegram to Oom Paul had given him a chance years before to address an open letter to His Majesty, asking whether there were not conditions at his own door that might demand his attention. Now the novelist wrote a series of letters, and these were followed by a general *enquête*, the findings of which were published in Paris, and commented on the world over. Against this neither the speeches of Buelow in 1902 nor in 1907-08, nor the various publications drawing attention to the Polish "menace" sounded convincing. That the opposition even in higher circles in Germany to the policy of "extermination" was very strong, is to be seen from the recently published *Memoirs of Hutten-Czapski*. Leaders in this opposition were men like Delbrück and Harnack.

Against the steady hardening of the general will in Poznań and along the Vistula, neither edicts nor penalties could avail. The making of the schools into an instrument for germanization, with severe vetoes on all expressions of Polish patriotism, only roused a hatred for all state institutions, and drove the emotional life of these concerned underground. Every second home became a schoolroom, where in secret forbidden subjects were studied; and from which the grown-ups profited as much as the children. So too, every class in High School

had its cluster of youth circles, with their own signs and codes. These were nurtured with care, and handed down faithfully from one "generation" to another. It was all illegal, of course; so discoveries were bound to occur, and the assizes in different towns had always their share of cases of breach of the public order by schoolboys.

Even youth, then, had enlisted in the national movement; and it was to be expected that the workers as a class would not be overlooked. By 1902 Polish labour was fairly well organized. For decades the emigration to the west had gone on, and the tens of thousands of Poles in Westphalia soon had their own unions, serving both material and cultural ends. Their speech and their faith kept them from falling an easy prey to German Social Democracy, and at last a Federation of Polish Trades Unions was achieved, whose influence came to be felt most of all in the big industrial area of Upper Silesia. Apart from all this, however, the emigrant workers had long since been making an important contribution to the national cause, in the form of their savings. These they brought home on retiring, and used to purchase "three acres and a cow" for the autumn of life. Certain losses were of course to be reckoned with, where so many young folk emigrated; and to deal with this problem the Archbishop of Poznań lent his hand in 1902 to the founding of the St Isidore Society. The purpose was to keep records of all departing young people, and provide them with "passports" to their future parishes. Travelling agents were employed to follow this work up in Westphalia, and in this way much of the leakage was stopped.

This shifting of population had long been engaging the attention both of Polish and of German leaders. A special feature of it was the drift toward the towns. By 1910 one-third of the inhabitants of Poznań were urban, a striking change in fifty years. In 1885 there were still less than half a million people in the cities, slightly more than half of them being Catholic; twenty-five years later the number had reached 722,076, of whom three-fifths were Catholics. This trend was due to the rapid expansion of business and industry. The bad years of the early 'nineties drove many people from the farms; and although they suffered privations in the cities, they shared the return of prosperity that followed. Polish enterprises increased from 1882 to 1907 by one-ninth, German ones fell off by one-third. Only in the artisan field, however, had the former the advantage. Big industry was still four-fifths, middle range two-thirds, in German hands.

By the end of the century the Poles of Prussia, holding to the principle *sum cuique*, had won for themselves a large measure of

independence. They boycotted non-Poles, and husbanded their resources, both economic and cultural. Each township had its social organizations, alongside the local church. Each had its branch of *Rolnik*, which found for the farmer the best market for his products, and sold him what he needed at the most just price. "Buy Polish!" on the one hand, and "Sell Polish!" on the other! In all this, the level of integrity maintained is surprising. It became a matter of national honour not to allow a single blot on the 'scutcheon.

The reader has looked in vain for any account of political activities during these years. There would be much to tell, and of a not uninteresting nature; but it had little bearing on the main issue. From 1894 onwards people read the reports of the many speeches in parliament, but expected nothing from them. The forum of the Diet and the *Reichstag* was a useful place for airing grievances; and was employed by the deputies for getting all sorts of material into print. Some of this had nothing to do with politics, while some would not have been passed by the censor otherwise. In parliament one saw the Centrum—German and Catholic—strangely allied in opposition to the government with the Marxists under Bebel, and the nationalist Poles under Abbé Jażdzewski and Bernard Chrzanowski. Reading the speeches of these two men, one is startled at the severity of the indictment they brought from time to time of all that Buelow and his helpers stood for.

A no less important part of the picture has also been omitted for lack of space, the story of the rise to influence of the Polish press. From the modest days of Chociszewski in Chelmno, and Miarka in Upper Silesia, not to mention the Poznanian pioneers again, a stately structure had arisen. The editors of the local papers from the Baltic coast to the upper reaches of the Oder were a power to be reckoned with. Witness the fact that during the school strike in 1906 not less than one hundred and fifty press "offences" were dealt with by the courts. Akin to this was the publishing business in general, in which the Church had the lion's share. Prayer-books, tracts, manuals for popular education, "outlines" of every kind, and of course the dime novel, even the penny dreadful, were to be found everywhere. The rising generation of the 'nineties read as none before it. To encourage this interest, and direct it into profitable channels became a major concern of responsible leaders. The clergy led the way, the local chemist was their right-hand man; and even the village midwife did her part.

Against all this the stupid, often brutal, but seldom constructive treatment of the masses by Prussian officialdom had no chance of

success. Often it did harm rather than good. Neither the gendarme in the village, nor the sergeant who drilled the recruits, nor the overseer in mine and foundry was a suitable agent for winning the confidence of the Slav, let alone for assimilating him. And the teacher's role was the most hopeless of all. At times patronizing, at times domineering, these people brought it about that many who were not sure whether they were Poles or not were given that name as a term of abuse; and they did not forget it. Thus was a great opportunity lost, the interests of the Prussian state were defeated, and the issue left to be decided in the heat of world war.



## CHAPTER XIX

### GALICIA IN THE PERIOD OF AUTONOMY AND SELF-GOVERNMENT, 1849-1914

WHEN the revolutionary movements of 1848 were suppressed, the position of Galicia seemed desperate. Austria was wont to treat her as a colony, which furnished good soldiers and consumed the manufactures of the other provinces, but was inhabited by inferior people, who must be germanized. In comparison with the western Austrians, indeed, the Galicians were poor and unenlightened. The ignorant peasant owned too little land to support his many children, and each generation left the holdings smaller still. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Austrian government had maintained the antiquated system of land-tenure throughout the realm, though both farmers and gentry earnestly demanded its reform. Under the influence of the liberal ideas of 1848 the government issued the patents of 17 April and 7 September, for Galicia and the whole realm respectively, which abolished serfdom. In their haste, however, they failed to deal with the question of compensating the lords for the loss of their proprietary rights and the gentry for the woods and pasture now made accessible to the farmers. This failure greatly reduced the value of the patents, and led to many disputes and much mutual ill-will.

The peasants, illiterate and poor, were often tormented by harvest failures which brought famine in their train, while famine gave rise to typhus, notably in 1847 and 1853. Later on, Galician peasants with little land or with none emigrated or flocked to the towns. At this time, however, the towns were small. The largest, Lwów, numbered only about 80,000; Cracow, about 50,000; others, a few thousand souls. Factories did not exist, and trade was almost exclusively retail. Communications remained primitive. Schools were few—fourteen middle schools with 4000 pupils, and about 1700 elementary schools. Lwów university, with its German professors, played no part in the intellectual life of the country. The bureaucracy held that the towns should be germanized; the gentry—the most conscious national factor—impoverished and destroyed; and the peasantry made, as the phrase went, “imperial”—faithful supporters of the dynasty.

Poles were on principle excluded from all the more important dignities, and office entrusted almost exclusively to bureaucrats of German or Czech extraction, who did not understand the language of the country and showed hostility to Polish culture. Drawn from distant provinces, neither knowing nor caring to know the local connections, deaf to every hint save such as came from Vienna, they evoked the well-founded complaints and opposition of the Galicians. In Galicia, disregarding Jews scattered through the small towns and villages, and Germans, a small class of newly-imported colonists and officials, the population was composed of Poles and Ruthenes, each numbering some two millions. The majority among the Poles lived in the west of the country, but Poles were thickly scattered also through the east, where the Ruthenians predominated. These were peasants without a developed feeling of nationality, and lacked a literature, a refined language, or a class of educated men to lead them. The small group of educated "popes" or clergy diligently emphasized and guarded the separateness of the Greek Catholic confession, and saw in it the foundation of national development. Since the Union of Brześć (Brest) in 1595, this confession had differed from the Roman not in dogma but in ritual alone, particularly in the liturgical use of the "church" or "old slavonic" language, which was not Ruthenian. The Ruthene language in Galicia, often styled *rusiński* or "Little Russian", differed materially from Russian, and was near akin to the dialects of the dwellers in Podolia, Volhynia and the Ukraine, countries ruled by Russia since the Partitions. In these, however, the Union was persecuted by the Russian government and the Ruthene Uniates were exterminated. Thus, a strong religious difference between the Ruthenes within and without Galicia came into being.

Hoping that the Ruthenes would become active allies in its struggle with the Poles, the Austrian government vigorously supported the development of their nationality. By dividing the two nationalities they counted on drawing profit from the internal strife, and so indeed, they did. The German officials instilled into the minds of the educated Ruthenes the conviction that the germanizing activity of the government would defend them against Polish influence. The clergy who headed the Ruthenian movement therefore declared themselves Austrian patriots and foes of all Polish national tendencies. Under cover of this declaration, however, a current moved towards Russia. The majority of the Ruthenes lived in the empire of the Tsar, which passed for the greatest power in Europe. Thus a handful of educated Ruthenes came to think that their nation should aim at

uniting in language and religion with the Russians, and in time should enjoy political union with them. The focus of such propaganda was the Greek Catholic cathedral of St Jur (St George) in Lwów, and its adherents came to be called St Jurists or Muscophils. Under their influence, supported by the Austrian government, which was unconscious of their ultimate aims, there emerged a Ruthenian national movement demanding the division of Galicia into East and West. The Ruthenes, or rather the St Jurists in the name of the passive mass of peasants, demanded that in the east of Galicia Ruthene should be the official language, and that until it had attained the necessary development, German should take its place. To secure a majority over the Polish element, they advocated the union of eastern Galicia with Bukovina, where hardly any Poles were to be found. Thus they hoped to ruthenize or germanize the Poles who lived east of the dividing line, the river San. At the same time the St Jurist ecclesiastics began the artificial russification of the Ruthenian literary language and orthography.

In Galicia there were also almost half a million Jews, crowded into small townships and the Jewish quarters of Lwów and Cracow, while in almost every village a Jewish family kept the inn. Cut off from all education, they were incredibly ignorant and superstitious, following the Talmud with rigour. For the mass, the only callings open were usury, inn-keeping and petty trade. On these they lived, showing themselves ingenious and mobile, and making competition difficult for the Polish townsmen, who were untrained and for centuries past impoverished. Disliking the Poles, the Jews sought the protection of the bureaucracy, and since their ordinary speech was not Hebrew, but "Jargon" resembling German, the bureaucracy thought them excellent material for germanization.

Thus the Galician Poles found themselves threatened at once from above by the Austrian bureaucracy and from below by the Ruthene movement with its official German support, while both peoples were menaced by the Jews. The danger was increased by the social ferment caused by the poverty and ignorance of the farmers, and by the class hatred against the landowners, who with the middle classes fostered Polish patriotism. All this boded ill for the future of the Polish people in the Austrian sector of Poland.

For half a century the hopes of the Poles for deliverance from Austria were bound up with their belief in the imminence and efficacy of European revolution. In the war which was to bring them freedom they counted chiefly upon France, and upon secret arma-

ments of their own. Instead of deliverance, however, the year 1848 brought the breakdown of hopes from revolution.

In Vienna, in Prague, in Lwów, in Hungary—everywhere the local Austrian revolutions were put down. A military government came into power. It foiled recourse to the fruits of the constitution, from 1851 suspending even the centralizing constitution of March, while the idea of a European war for "the deliverance of oppressed peoples" was from the first a Utopian romance. It is not surprising that from 1850 the Austrian Poles, timidly at first, began to be convinced that they must long postpone the programme of armed struggle for deliverance and replace it by a programme of "organic work".

This programme arose from the conviction that for the future of the Polish people it was more urgent, important and practical to undertake economic and social reforms, thereby raising the level of its culture, wealth and education, than to persist in attempting to gain independence by force, which under existing conditions was hopeless. To strengthen the national vigour for the task, reconciliation for a long time with Austria was necessary. The Poles must be loyal to her policy, endeavouring especially to support the House of Habsburg. Despite the momentary reaction, the strong breath of political liberation which pervaded Austria in 1848 and the accession of the young Francis Joseph after the fall of the Metternich system promised to facilitate the embodiment of these ideas in fact.

None the less, the abandonment of the programme of armed strife and its attendant conspiracy was not easily accomplished. Armed strife undoubtedly demanded great sacrifices and led to prison, to exile, to forfeiture and to death. But it was an expression of protest against partition, a manifestation of the strong feeling of a people ready for sacrifice, and therefore it was very dear to their ambitious and patriotic hearts. The fear arose that the path of organic work might lead to acceptance of the partition and to forgetfulness of the idea of independence. Moreover, the transition to organic work required at least the most ample provincial autonomy. Happily a statesman capable of embodying the programme of autonomy in fact was found in Agenor, Count Gołuchowski, with whose appearance a new era in the life of Galicia begins.

Gołuchowski was a wealthy landowner, of rare political capacity, with a mind both sound and critical, a man of energy, indifferent to popularity or immediate success. He was one of the few Poles who in their youth volunteered to serve Austria, and that from no bureaucratic ambition but because he judged it the most effective way to

serve his people. Having taken his stand on the basis of loyalty towards the monarchy, indeed, he was logically unable to advocate independence. He strove the more vigorously to raise and strengthen Polish national life in the Austrian sector under the conditions which existed.

According to the orthodox view of government circles prior to 1848, only a German could be governor of Galicia, since none other could grasp the idea of a uniform centralizing and germanizing monarchy. The revolution of 1848 changed this conception, since it shook their faith in the possibility of ruling the country by foreigners who did not know its needs, and the dignity of governor was entrusted to Zaleski, a Pole. Zaleski was animated by the best intentions towards the country, but roused opposition in Austrian military circles, the strongest representatives of the programme of centralizing and of germanizing the country. Gołuchowski, who followed Zaleski as governor on 19 April 1849, was far better fitted to overcome the difficulties. On the one hand, he was not afraid of unpopularity in a country still deeply agitated by revolutionary hopes; on the other, he succeeded in fighting skilfully against the Austrian bureaucrats and soldiers who came into power in Vienna during 1849, after the suppression of the short-lived revolution. From 1849 to 1859, however, the minister for home affairs was Alexander Bach, who enjoyed the confidence of the army. Bach began his rule from the suspension of the recently-granted March constitution, by which the monarchy had promised parliamentary government, recognition of provincial separation and the introduction of citizen rights. The promised parliament he sought to replace by the so-called "Council of State" composed of officials. Towards national tendencies he showed immediate hostility.

In 1849 Galicia was placed in a state of siege and police rule, while Hammerstein, the commander-in-chief, representing the alliance between Bach and the army, incessantly interfered in political questions. Gołuchowski, however, was supported by the Emperor's mother and by the young Francis Joseph himself. Under pressure from the military camarilla, indeed, the Emperor commissioned the Bach government, but regarded it with a certain reserve, while he sympathized strongly with Gołuchowski. In such circumstances Gołuchowski could not give Galicia a swift emancipation from the pressure of the centralizing system, but during ten years he prepared for change and removed many defects.

The opportunity for reorganization was the better that the period

1849 to 1859 witnessed throughout Austria the introduction of far-reaching administrative and judicial reforms, undertaken under the pressure of the recently suppressed revolution. These were designed to level the existing differences in the administrative structure of the several provinces and to unify legal status throughout the Empire, and therefore in Galicia. At first the government intended to divide it into two or even three smaller provinces, each with its own diet, but in the end it abandoned the idea. In 1849 the chief administration of the whole country was organized under a Viceroy, resident in Lwów. The country was divided into counties (*powiat*) under sheriffs (*starosta*), and provincial and county treasuries were organized. Self-governing village communes were created, but the private estates of the landowners remained outside them. The towns both great and small received ample self-government exercised by town councils. The whole country was divided into more than 200 judicial districts, with a series of "instances" under codified and amplified laws. These reforms, though not all immediately definitive, transformed the administrative and judicial conditions in Austria, and formed the basis of the structure which survived until the end of the Great War.

Goluchowski, indeed, lacked the power and influence necessary to resist successfully in every case the bureaucratic centralizing and germanizing tendencies represented by his immediate superior, Alexander Bach. He was strong enough, however, to check the intended division of the country into two or three lesser provinces, and of the Diet into twin diets of Lwów and Cracow. This, the centralizers at Vienna had hoped, would weaken the Polish element and conduce to the further germanization of eastern Galicia. He succeeded moreover in replacing many German bureaucrats, who were ignorant even of the Polish language and disliked the country, by men of greater worth. To polonize the whole administration was impossible, but he endeavoured to secure officials linked with the country by close ties, and to improve and train his subordinates. When possible, he got rid of the system of informers, and he opposed illegal arrests and political persecutions, although pressure by the central authorities and the army sometimes robbed him of success. In schools he strenuously upheld the right to use the Polish language, and opposed that germanization and, in the eastern districts, ruthenization, at which the central government aimed. He specially resisted the germanization of the Jagiello university in Cracow, and fought for the introduction of a chair of the Polish language at Lwów, where hitherto German had reigned alone. He also fought against the

prevalent conviction in Vienna that all the Galician gentry were conspiring to break away from the Empire. Through his influence the gentry detailed their grievances in memorials which they laid before Francis Joseph when he arrived in Galicia in 1851. Although conspiracy did not cease, its activity became ever rarer and feebler during these years.

At this time the worst running sore in Galicia was caused by the question of enfranchising the farmers. By conferring upon the peasants the ownership of the land which they had previously farmed with rights of user, and by annulling the services due from them on the lords' estates, the patent of 1848 had created many new problems. In particular, the so-called servitudes of woods and pasture in the peasants' favour continued to cause incessant disputes with the land-owners, leading to bloodshed and to the devastation of the woodlands. The patent also left unsolved the question of "indemnification", or payment to the landlords for their loss of ownership, and without this the transition from the socage system to the system of hired labour threatened the whole agricultural class with ruin. The question of indemnification was solved only in part in 1857 and finally in 1890; that of servitudes somewhat earlier, in 1853. The patrimonial system of the medieval countryside survived only in the right of selling liquor (*propinacja*) which was not finally extinguished in Galicia until 1889.

Social and economic reforms Gołuchowski regarded as extremely urgent, since on them depended the rise of the country from poverty and ignorance. The same considerations applied to enterprises such as the construction of roads and the regulation of rivers. Under him, between 1858 and 1861, the first railway through Galicia helped to link that country with western Austria, and to transport its agricultural and mineral products, such as salt, wood and coal, into the markets of industrial regions. At the same time Galician banks in the modern sense of the word began, while economic associations were founded to increase agricultural production. All this paved the way for that increase in Galician wealth which marked the second half of the nineteenth century.

Gołuchowski was by no means hostile to the budding national aspirations of the Ruthenes. He did not deny their right to cultural development, but was concerned only lest this, as the Vienna bureaucracy desired, should lead to perpetual internecine conflicts with the Poles. He was hostile, however, towards the nascent panslavism of Russia, which aimed at bringing all Slavonic nations under the sceptre of the Tsar. Russia, "the third Rome", aspired to absorb all Slavonic

nations and thus qualify for world-hegemony. Such a panslavist programme, made popular by a large and influential body of Slavophil writers, was aimed above all at the Poles. But it was also immensely dangerous for the Little Russians, for it led inevitably to the submergence of this numerous but undeveloped people in the Russian sea. The Poles always hotly opposed the union of Slavonic peoples under the Russian sceptre, and Gołuchowski, like all Poles, objected to the dissemination of the panslavist idea among the Ruthens. His administration coincided with the efforts of the St Jurists to approximate the Little Russian or Ruthene language to Russian, and to seek support for the national movement, ostensibly in Austria, but really beyond her frontiers. Gołuchowski, on the other hand, would permit the development in Galicia of Little Russian schools, higher education and literature, but wished to check the artificial infiltration of panslavist ideas from Russia. His attitude, however, roused much discontent. The Poles condemned his undue tolerance of Little Russian development, instancing the permission of the Ruthene language in the middle schools of eastern Galicia and of the building in Lwów in 1849 of the "National House", where Little Russian cultural and humanitarian institutions found a home. Such discord grew in later years, and the question of choosing between panslavism or Little Russian nationalism divided both Polish and Ruthene parties until the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.

The war of 1859, waged against France and the Kingdom of Piedmont, vividly revealed the internal weakness of Austria and the inefficiency of what was then called "the Bach system". Francis Joseph, fearing for his empire, resolved to transform the existing Austrian structure in a constitutional and liberal spirit, in accordance with the political tendencies then prevalent throughout Europe. This task he entrusted to Gołuchowski, whom he made minister of home affairs in 1859, and, next year, minister of state, or premier.

Gołuchowski, though a skilful administrator of Galicia, had had no opportunity of revealing his fundamental constitutional ideas. It was known that he opposed centralization, but what he desired to substitute for it could only be surmised. He now revealed his conviction that the state must be strengthened, since it formed the indispensable defence and guarantee for all the subject peoples, Poles among the foremost. The fittest means would be the decentralization of the monarchy, perhaps even its federalization, with due account taken of the historic individuality of the constituent countries and races.

Austria comprised several highly-developed peoples, Hungarians,



Germans, Czechs, Poles and Croats, but also races whose culture and politics were primitive, such as Slovenes, Ruthenes and Serbs. The dominant idea of Gołuchowski was to give equal status to the several languages and to allow each nation to develop its own culture within its historic boundaries, recognizing the Austrian countries as distinct political units. His first step was to secure for the national languages greater rights as compared with German, hitherto the sole official tongue. He next summoned to Vienna the so-called Reinforced Council of the Realm (*Verstärkter Reichsrat*) containing delegates from all the countries, as well as officials belonging to the Council of the Realm. To this Reinforced Council he entrusted the working out of his instructions for future organization. To it Galicia contributed three eminent citizens.

The programme of rebuilding Austria on federal lines appealed to Galicia with peculiar strength, and in the following years rallied to itself all the Poles in the Austrian sector. But the jarring internal contradictions within the monarchy made its realization most difficult. The Hungarians demanded the recognition of what they styled "countries of the crown of St Stephen", as a separate kingdom, linked with the other part of the monarchy only by a dynastic union. Other peoples inhabiting the Austrian lands aimed either at transforming the whole monarchy into a very loose federation, or at maintaining the centralized system on a basis not of absolutism but of a democratic and liberal constitution. The Poles, the Czechs and some of the Germans favoured federalism, while most Germans were for centralization. On the other hand the bureaucracy and the army wished for centralization without a constitution. In this chaos of conflicting aims and programmes, Gołuchowski proposed a solution which conformed neither to the centralist nor to the extreme federalist view. He envisaged a federalism limited by the establishment of central organs, especially a parliament or council of the realm (*Reichsrat*), to decide the "common questions" of the whole monarchy. Also he did not wish for the recognition of Hungary as a separate state, but only as one of a series of countries like all the rest. On his initiative the Emperor embodied these ideas in the "October Diploma" of 20 October 1860, designed to be the basis of the whole monarchy.

The Diploma was undoubtedly the first step towards a transformation of the Austrian monarchy into a federation of countries, each with its own Landtag or Diet (*Sejm*), its own government and its own laws, while the number of common questions was carefully limited. None the less it failed to create enthusiasm in federally-

mindcd circles, above all in Hungary, where it was feared that the unity of the Hungarian countries would be broken, and that the "Crown of St Stephen" would not form a national unit as of old. The centralists or German liberals were no less hostile to the Diploma than were the bureaucracy and army. The German Liberal party, indeed, aimed at the transformation of Austria into a constitutional monarchy, with far-reaching citizen rights and a solemn written charter of freedom. But even they wished the monarchy to be ruled from Vienna by German officials, and they most keenly opposed the autonomy, whether broad or narrow, of the several countries.

The ill-will shown by the Germans and Hungarians and their ever keener attacks drove Gohuchowski, within a few weeks of the issue of the Diploma, to resign. In his stead the Emperor made Baron A. Schmerling minister of state, and in December 1860, gave him the task of transforming Austria into a constitutional monarchy. Several years of strife between centralists and federalists were necessary before the intermediate idea of the autonomy of countries and particularly of the autonomy of Galicia proved victorious.

Called to power through pressure from centralist circles, Schmerling regarded his task as that of introducing into Austria such a structure as they desired. He differed from Bach in that while Bach favoured autocracy or the rule of a camarilla of officials and of the army, Schmerling desired a parliamentary structure. He envisaged a central parliament of two houses sitting in Vienna, with the Germans predominant in each. This parliament would have power to decide all the most weighty questions, and decentralization would be reduced to very small dimensions.

Schmerling introduced his plan by publishing the "February Patent" on 26 February 1861. The Patent did not repeal the October Diploma, but purported to be its fulfilment. Actually, however, it aimed at strengthening centralization. The "Basic law for the representation of the realm" and the laws for the several countries and their representation, among them the Statute for Galicia and its ordinance for the Diet, limited the action of the Diet to a few questions only. The enactments did not recognize the right of the countries to determine their own taxation. They retained as the highest organ of state a Viceroy completely independent of the Diet and subordinate to the central ministry. The federalists' only gain from the Schmerling legislation was that in the central parliament (*Reichsrat*) the House of Representatives was not to be chosen immediately by the people, but, in the spirit of the October Diploma, it was to be composed of delegates

from the local diets, making their election the sole important task that these assemblies were called on to perform. Galicia felt it as a slight that of the 343 members of the House of Representatives it was granted only 38, a number out of proportion to its area and to a population constituting one-fourth of the Austrian total. Although a broader "autonomy" was not conceded, however, a sure basis, even if a narrow one, for further struggle was established, and the parliament enabled the people to defend itself against oppression by the German bureaucracy. The existing apathy gave place to keen political life. Interest in social and economic questions increased. Newspapers arose, unhampered by the censorship, as hitherto, in the analysis of public questions. The nucleus of the later political parties began to appear.

The elections to the Galician Diet summoned for March 1861, were held with a full sense of their far-reaching significance. The first Diet itself deliberated with great dignity, though many of its members were ill-educated rustics, Polish and Ruthenian, for whom the electoral law had reserved 74 seats out of 150—the Vienna government counting on their hostility to the gentry and middle classes. The government, however, allowed the Diet to deliberate for only ten days, and pressed for the earliest possible election of delegates to the Council of the Realm. Although as a protest against the centralist tendencies of the government some opposed this election, it was carried out. Among the 38 delegates elected, there was no lack of peasants, and 13 were Ruthenes.

Between the Schmerling cabinet and the Diet and Polish society of Galicia, incessant war raged from 1861 to 1865 in both Diet and parliament. The Hungarians from the first and the Czechs from 1864 boycotted the Vienna parliament and thereby rendered it futile. Schmerling tried to break Polish resistance by supporting the Ruthenes and by constantly extending their linguistic rights while denying them to the Poles. He sent to Galicia two successive Viceroys who were Germans ignorant of the local languages, and instructed them to frown on all attempts to extend the acknowledged rights of the Diet. Its acts and the resolutions which it sent to the government were rejected, as were similar resolutions from the delegates in the Council of the Realm during 1861-5. The Council, however, voted several far-reaching laws, such as the communal law of 1862, which imposed upon Galicia a communal self-government developed beyond its needs, and that in the name of the unification of communal relations throughout the realm.

The ruthless war of the Vienna centralists with the Polish element was facilitated by the outbreak of the "January insurrection" of 1863 in the neighbouring Polish Kingdom. This evoked a moral upheaval in Galicia also, together with high hopes that with the help of the Emperor Napoleon III the Polish question would be brought before an international tribunal. The Galician Poles sent armed forces to help their brethren in the Kingdom, and shared in the unsuccessful attempts by French and English diplomacy to move for the resurrection of Poland. Thus they enabled the Austrian bureaucracy to represent them as incorrigible revolutionaries, to introduce a state of siege in Galicia and to render her rights an absurdity.

Happily for the Poles, Austria was too weak and divided for such a policy to have enduring success. By 1865 centralism had been undermined. It soon appeared that "the countries of the crown of St Stephen", steered by the skilful hand of Deak, intended at no price to renounce the programme of personal union with Austria, or to submit to centralization. At the same time the Czechs, with their decisive majority in Bohemia and Moravia, demanded the union of Bohemia, Moravia and even Austrian Silesia in a federal Kingdom of "the crown of St Venceslas". This would enjoy a relationship with regard to Austria like that dreamed of by the Hungarians under Deak. Francis Joseph then perceived that Schmerling's programme of centralizing the business of the whole realm in the hands of the parliament and bureaucracy was impracticable. In 1865, therefore, he replaced Schmerling by Count Belcredi, a politician far more inclined to satisfy the demands for decentralization. Belcredi also, however, laboured in vain for an understanding with the Hungarians, Czechs and Poles. In 1866, the disaster at Sadowa made his task by no means easier. His plans included the recognition of Hungary as a separate realm, linked with Austria by a common dynasty and a personal union, while in Bohemia and Galicia he wished to discontinue the system of germanization. In 1865 he had obtained the temporary suspension of Schmerling's statute for parliamentary representation, and in 1866, after two months' war, he made an important attempt to win over the Poles. He invited Gólurowski to become Viceroy in Galicia, and to help in reconciling Austria with the Poles. Gólurowski, however, stipulated that the administration in Galicia must become wholly Polish, that the language of the country must receive an exclusive status in internal administration and in schools, that officials hostile to the country must be weeded out and germanizing elements banished. Hard as they were, his

terms were accepted. In September 1866, he again became Viceroy, and was greeted with unbounded sympathy by the people. This great increase in favour since his first appointment in 1849 was due to popular appreciation of his aims and methods.

Thus ended the era of germanization. Galician internal administration became definitely national, especially after the introduction of Polish in 1869 as obligatory both in executive and in judicial business. When the lower officials felt themselves firmly united with the country and when office without knowledge of the Polish language was impossible, the dependence of the Viceroy on the central government seemed less dangerous. The political opinion of the country now turned in favour of the Austrian monarchy. The policy of keeping the country poor and ignorant, and of exciting the Ruthenes against the Poles on the principle *divide et impera*, the government of Bach and his adherents, above all, the monstrous plan of rousing peasant hatred against all other classes, on which a lurid light was thrown by the bureaucratically-organized slaughter of landlords by peasants in Galicia in 1846—all these memories had long prevented harmony between Austria and her Polish subjects. But after 1863, when the desperate rising against Russia was quenched in blood and ruthless russification in the Kingdom began, men inevitably asked themselves whether after all they ought not to seek an understanding with Austria. Austria threatened the Polish element far less than did Russia and Prussia, and might even become an ally against the Tsar. War on three fronts at once could never end favourably for the Poles, and must long impede their national development. In order to breathe, they must form a kind of lung, some area relatively free for the development of their national culture, and in Prussia and Russia this was impossible. Belcredi's policy and the monarch's disfavour towards the previous centralism seemed to favour this development. Political realism bade the Poles seize the opportunity of an understanding with the Habsburg dynasty, whose rule over Slavs was so gravely threatened by Russian panslavism, a movement even more hostile to Austria. Hence the address voted by the Galician Diet on 10 December 1866, which ascribed to Austria the mission of shielding national freedom and of defending Western civilization against the East. Austria was no longer the personification of German bureaucracy but comprehended her higher mission. Her internal structure was the consecration of freedom, while she had become the guardian of the civilization of the West, the rights of nationality, humanity and justice. "For centuries", they declared, "such a mission fell to

us (Poles). Therefore, without fear of deserting our national ideal, believing in the mission of Austria and trusting in the durability of the changes announced by the Monarch as his firm purpose, we declare from the bottom of our hearts that with thee, most illustrious lord, we stand and we will stand." This address heralded an understanding between the dynasty and the Polish element in Galicia, thanks to which that element gained the possibility of cultural development, and made Galicia a focus of political thought and Polish patriotism.

Immediately, however, the opposition of the German centralizing party to Belcredi brought about his fall. Early in 1867, Baron Beust, who was not suspected of favouring the idea of federation, came from Saxony to be first minister. Imitating Belcredi, Beust framed a compact with the Hungarians for a realm of the "Crown of St Stephen", thenceforward called "Transleithania", and ordered fresh elections in the countries of "Cisleithania", as the remainder of the Habsburg monarchy was named. The newly-elected diets had to send delegates to the Council of the Realm, in order to adopt the pact with Hungary, and to reconstruct Cisleithania. Beust passed for an advocate of liberalism in the new constitution, but an opponent of introducing federalism in Cisleithania.

The Galician address of 1866 had not defined the Polish aims. It was generally understood, however, that these centred on the October Diploma, which proffered an autonomy so wide as to make Austria almost a federation. The Czechs as federalists went even further than the Poles. At the same time it became clear that Beust opposed federalism. In face of his opposition, Czechs and Poles behaved differently. The Czechs began to look rather to Russia than to Austria, and to see in Russia a power beneath whose wings they might find shelter. Their leaders took part in the Moscow panslavist congress which Russian propaganda directed against Austria. The Poles on the contrary recognized Austria as necessary, and would not contribute to her disruption from within. This explains why the Czechs now raised the cry of separation for the countries of "the crown of St Venceslas" as a confederate state, and refused to take part in the Council of the Realm, where the project had no chance of success. The Galician parliament, on the other hand, after long hesitation and struggle with the minority, elected delegates, though it was known that the centralists would have a majority in the Council. This decision was strongly influenced by Gołuchowski, who was then substituting Polish and Ruthenian for German in the schools.

The Polish delegates who attended the Council of the Realm elected in May 1867 found a strong centralist majority with which they must wage incessant war during the debates on the constitution. This war mainly concerned the enlargement of the rights of local diets and ended not altogether unfavourably. Both in the new basic laws passed during 1867 and 1868, and in the contemporary ordinances, some concessions to the autonomy of the countries were made. Galician opinion, however, deemed these too small and too slow, and in 1868 the Diet put forward more far-reaching demands by voting the so-called Galician Resolution.

The Galician Resolution, of 28 September 1868, several times reiterated in 1869-73, demanded (1) responsibility of the Viceroy to the parliament, (2) a supreme court for Galicia, (3) the establishment in Vienna of a Galician minister, (4)—most important of all—the extension of the legislative authority of the Diet to many further questions, leaving to the Council only the most important questions affecting the whole realm. Galicia would thus receive “national self-government within limits corresponding with the needs and separate relationships of the country”, for the expression “autonomy” was carefully avoided. The cost of this self-government was to fall on the revenues of Crown estates in Galicia and on sums assigned from the funds of the realm in favour of Galicia. The Resolution, therefore, demanded not merely an extension of self-government, or even autonomy, but something greater—the separation of Galicia from a structure comprising the remainder of the state.

This Resolution formed a compromise between the views of the federalists and of those who would be contented with an extension of autonomy. Gołuchowski opposed even this compromise not because he—the creator of the October Diploma—was against separation, but because in his judgment, the international and the internal situation gave no warrant for such demands. In the given conditions, he held, the proper course was to make progress step by step, not to invite opposition both from the Emperor and from abroad, for two of the partitioning powers, Prussia and Russia, were keenly interested in the question. When the Resolution was passed he resigned, and for some years remained a stranger to political life.

Meanwhile the Polish delegation took up the battle for the Resolution in the Council of the Realm and carried it on with great energy for almost five years (1868-73). The predominance of centralist influence in the Vienna parliament, however, made its acceptance there impossible—the more so because the separation of Galicia would have

brought on that of Bohemia and perhaps also of other countries, or a general federation. The Emperor, although no friend to centralism in the Bach spirit, did not wish to go so far in rebuilding the realm. When the Diet voted the Resolution, he abandoned his intended journey to Galicia. Prussia and Russia both held that separation would immediately excite the Poles in their own sectors, and sent representations and warnings to Vienna. Thanks to all these causes, the five-year campaign for the Resolution could not end in a hundred per cent victory.

None the less it did not end in a hundred per cent defeat. For monarch and monarchy it was as important to win the Polish element as for the Poles to create the possibility of national development. Hence arose attempts by each successive cabinet to reach an understanding. That of Count Taaffe (1868), which was prone to compromise, that of the Pole, Count Alfred Potocki (1870), and even that of Baron Hohenwart (1871), which in a great measure favoured the demands of both Czechs and Poles—as well as two centralist cabinets which gained temporary power—all were unsuccessful. Each, however, was compelled to make greater and greater concessions to the autonomy and polonization of the country. The Poles gained the enforcement of the law of 1867 concerning Polish or Ruthenian in schools, the establishment of a School Council for the country, the complete polonization of the Universities of Cracow and Lwów and of the Lwów Polytechnic; the creation of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow (1871), the nomination of a special “minister for Galicia” as a member of the Crown Council, whose opinion must be taken before disposing of all Galician affairs, and the enlargement of the competence of the Diet in many important questions. But these successes, indubitable, though not so far-reaching as the Resolution desired, were accompanied by some defeats. The most serious was that in 1873 the centralist cabinet of Count Auersperg introduced a law abolishing the existing system of electing the Council of the Realm by the local diets and based the composition of the Council on direct election. Thus throughout Austria the local diets lost much of their political significance. It was clear that for a long time the “Galician Resolution” must be abandoned, and that designs of enlarging autonomy must be shaped as Gołuchowski indicated, that is, step by step.

From 1873 onwards, the era of profiting by previous gains in the sphere of autonomy begins. The conviction prevailed that, although a political campaign for enlarged autonomy was necessary, it had its



drawbacks, since it absorbed all the strength of society in a sphere far less important than that of organic work and its foundations. This conviction was attested in 1873 by the entry of Poles into the Council of the Realm, although based on direct election, which Poles regarded as contravening autonomy. Further proofs were given when Florian Ziemiałkowski, an eminent Polish politician, entered the cabinet, and when Gołuchowski became Viceroy of Galicia for the third time. A few years later, the Czechs imitated the Poles in turning from political strife to work on the foundations of society.

The structure of Galicia in the years 1873-1914 was based on autonomy and self-government. The bounds of autonomy traced by the Diet appeared in § 11 of the basic law of 1867, setting out the questions reserved for the Council of the Realm and assigning all others to the local diets. Chief of these were the so-called "local development" (agriculture and forestry, agrarian organization, regulation of rivers, etc.) questions of charity, supervision of hygiene, and in great measure school questions, transferred by the law of 1883, which enlarged the local jurisdiction in this sphere. In these questions the Diet issued laws which required confirmation by the monarch.

The composition of the Diet was defined in the Provincial Statute issued by Schmerling in fulfilment of the February Patent of 1861. Its 149 deputies were elected by *Curiae* (professions), 44 by the great landowners, 3 by chambers of commerce, 28 by towns and 74 by the rural communes. There were also *ex-officio* members sitting in the Diet by virtue of their office—7 bishops, 3 Roman Catholics, 3 Greek Catholics, and 1 Armenian, the president of the Academy of Sciences, and 3 rectors, from the Lwów and Cracow universities and the Lwów Engineering College. The Poles preponderated, since the Ruthene representatives came only from the rural communes. The Ruthenes, however, formed at least one-fifth of the membership.

The Diet, which normally met twice a year, was presided over by a Marshal of the Province, appointed by the Emperor from among its members. He held office also when the Diet was not sitting, having as his colleagues a committee of six members chosen by the Diet to carry out its laws and to supervise the local self-government, district councils, rural communes and towns. Some towns, such as Lwów and Cracow, had far-reaching self-government, while smaller places were more modestly endowed. In general, perhaps excepting the rural communes, self-government worked beneficially. It drew the whole population into public life and taught it to solve unaided the administrative problems which had lain in the hands of the

bureaucracy. The revenues at its disposal, however, were small, for it could not impose taxes of its own, but could only add meagre "supplements" to those paid to the government.

The administrative questions reserved for those organs of government which were under the "Ministry" or supreme central authority in Vienna, were dealt with by the Viceroy and his subordinate hierarchy of state officials—an elaborate "vicerealty" with numerous departments. To this the district offices were subordinate. From 1873 to 1914, the Viceroy was always nominated from among the eminent citizens of the country, and therefore endeavoured to cultivate the closest possible relations with the Diet. The attempt to make him formally responsible to it proved unsuccessful. The polonization of all local offices, however, combined with the existence in Vienna of a separate "minister for Galicia", through whose hands passed all its affairs before despatch by the professional ministry, none the less gave the country more actual independence than the letter of the law prescribed.

From 1867 school questions were settled by a special School Board, nominally under the Viceroy, but practically guided by its own vice-president. In the 'nineties, this was Michael Bobrzyński, a learned historian and Cracow professor, who raised the level of the schools and text-books. He turned the School Board into a kind of Galician Ministry of Education, to which the law of 1883 permitted much activity in advancing the education of the country.

The constitution of Galicia undoubtedly contained grave defects. The compass of autonomy was meagre and by no means conformed to the Resolution of 1868. But the dualism of authority was even more sensibly felt, for the organs of government and of self-government were not harmonized. Some questions belonged to both, and this caused mutual strife and much difficulty. The peasant commune, indeed, existed at the base, but it did not comprise the domains in the immediate possession of the great proprietors. It was therefore too small and too poor a body to fulfil its hardest tasks.

Galicia as a whole, in the years 1867-96, sent 63 members to the central parliament of 353. After the introduction of universal suffrage by Austria in 1907, she sent 106 out of the total of 516. Of these 106 the Ruthenes numbered 27, while several Jews gained seats. The Poles in the Council of the Realm formed a solid and disciplined "Polish Club", guided by leaders of talent, and influential in parliament. All the Austrian cabinets from 1873 to 1914 sought its support, and were careful not to pursue a policy in Galicia which would provoke

its opposition. In the House of Lords, some 30 Poles had seats, in part hereditary, in part for life on the Emperor's nomination.

Between 1873 and 1914, Galician society experienced a great psychological change, which may be described as the transition from political romanticism to economic positivism. After centuries of neglect, the economic side received due attention from the Diet and from a class of intelligent people who set the example of self-help and economic creativeness. Forty years of strenuous labour taught the most mature section of society to think in economic categories.

Above all else, efforts were made to raise Galician agriculture, which supported almost eighty per cent of the people. Agricultural societies were established in the two chief towns, and agricultural circles in almost all the communes. Numerous agricultural schools were founded, including two of high-school rank. With no little help from the Diet, the level of stock-breeding and dairying was raised. From 1873, credit banks in the small towns and villages swiftly developed, and supplied the people with relatively cheap credit, supplanting the usurer. A national improvement office was founded for reclaiming marshes, draining fields and regulating rivers. The rise in the level of agricultural production profited both the Poles and the Ruthenes, who likewise formed many credit societies, agricultural co-operatives, and, in 1883, the powerful trading organization named "National Trade". All these endeavours palliated the great defects which arose from the over-division of the land and the preponderance of holdings of less than five hectares. But even the fairly rapid subdivision of the great estates worked no cure, although year by year the number of large properties diminished. Galician small-holders, both Polish and Ruthene, went abroad in the season to earn wages in Germany and Denmark, or crossed the ocean to North or South America. Often, however, they returned, bringing capital for the development of their fatherland as well as what they had gained in economic science.

From 1880, ever greater efforts were made to raise the industry of the country as well as its agriculture. At first it had almost no factories, while handicraft stagnated. Yet the conditions for creating industry existed, for there were coal-mines and no lack of cheap labour, while the enterprising and commercialized Jewish element produced men of talent for trade and commercial leadership. But Galicia was flooded with goods manufactured in western Austria, especially in Bohemia and Vienna, where industry developed earlier, disposed of great capital sums, and enjoyed careful protection by the

government. Railways moreover helped it to compete in Galicia with industry arising there. None the less from 1900 Galician large-scale industry began to develop strongly.

In 1910, a special Bank of Industry was founded to assist it with the necessary capital. Institutes for protecting small-scale industry were also established, and industrial schools created in the towns. During the 'eighties, rich petroleum fields were discovered in Galicia, and the petroleum industry began to form an important source of social income. Thus the wealth of Galicia grew; the balance of trade became even more favourable, and the power to pay taxes and their "supplementaries" increased. In the earlier years of this period the budget of the Galician Diet amounted to little more than a million Austrian florins. During the period it multiplied thirtyfold. To help the financial economy, the Provincial Bank was established in 1883, and admirably managed. By its side arose a whole series of other banks and savings-banks, which could supply credit to production. The Galician Exhibition at Lwów in 1894 displayed the economic and cultural development of recent years and gave a strong stimulus to further progress. These happy results also owed much to the choice of Provincial Marshals endowed with eminent talent for administration. Such were the first Marshal, Leon Sapieha (1861-74), Michael Zyblikiewicz (1881-5) and Stanislas Badeni (1907-10).

The difficulty lay in effecting progress without laying too great financial burdens on the people. The capital expenditure, necessary for roads, schools, land betterment, the development of industry and the improvement of self-government, must be proportioned to their strength. The task was in fact performed. Many workers, indeed, contributed by devoting their lives to the economic and administrative advancement of the country. Such were Maurice Kraiński, for many years a member of the Land Department, Francis Stefczyk, the creator of the Co-operative movement in Galicia, Stanislas Szczepanowski, a pioneer of the petroleum industry, and others. Beside the politicians and agitators in Galicia arose the social workers, who chiefly stressed economic life.

In the period 1873 to 1914, Galicia surpassed all other Austrian provinces in promoting the organization of schools, both higher and lower. Her Diet had power to frame laws for their regulation and the above-named Local School Council was set up. This was in theory subordinate to the Viceroy and to the ministry in Vienna. In fact, however, after many battles waged with varying success, it came to represent society, and could determine many questions as it pleased.

Towards the close of the century, it established schools, decided on their language, appointed the teachers, carried on supervision, administered funds, accepted text-books, and arranged time-tables. Its influence was greatest on elementary, and less on middle schools, while the universities and the Engineering College were independent of it.

To raise school education was an object of the special care both of the Diet and of society as a whole. In forty years much was accomplished, especially in elementary schools. This involved struggles, for a considerable section of the Diet wished to establish elementary schools teaching only reading, writing and arithmetic. Progress in organizing those of a higher type, to prepare peasant children for other callings, was slow, but from 1900 the question was decided. Within the period, the number of elementary schools rose from 2500 to 6000, so that almost every village had a school of one class or more, and the children attending them numbered more than a million. Teachers increased in proportion, and about thirty "Seminaries" were established for their training. Thus the standard of learning and of text-books rose. Private societies effected much by founding reading-rooms and schools, publishing instructive books, and making the masterpieces of Polish literature accessible to the people.

Middle schools rose above 150, and the teaching constantly improved. These schools taught patriotism, by spreading the language and literature of the fatherland and a knowledge of its history. Towards the end, the peasant class supplied a considerable section of the scholars. The young generations which came from these schools were as warmly patriotic as those of the epoch of insurrection.

The pride of Galicia were its flourishing universities, Cracow and Lwów. Although subordinate to the Ministry of Education in Vienna, not to the Galician School Council, they now enjoyed full independence, having been purged of foreign professors. They contained in all 8000 students, while the Lwów Engineering College had 1800. An eminent school of fine arts arose in Cracow, in which painting and sculpture were taught by distinguished artists with the famous Matejko at their head. Numerous technical schools, for trade, veterinary science, agriculture and the like also existed. The Academy of Sciences founded in Cracow in 1873 comprised in its three departments about 100 Polish scholars from all the three Sectors of the country. At the close of the century, therefore, Galicia towered over the other Polish lands in education and was quite unlike the province deprived of schools and culture which it had been in 1848. In 1914

almost half the elementary schools were Ruthene, as were some seminaries and middle schools.

About 1910, the population of Galicia was classified on the basis of language. Of some 8,000,000 inhabitants, about 4,670,000, or nearly sixty per cent, were Poles; 3,200,000 Ruthenes; and 80,000 Germans. Denominationally, Roman Catholics numbered 3,700,000; Greek Catholics, 3,400,000; and Jews, 870,000. Many of the Greek Catholics regarded themselves as Poles, in the spirit of the definition "*gente Rutenus, natione Polonus*". The nationalities were intermingled; the Poles thick on the ground in the west, but more than a million and a half of them in the eastern counties.

In these conditions, a policy denationalizing and making the Ruthenes Polish by force could have no success. All Polish parties and all the Polish statesmen who ruled Galicia stood by the principle that the Ruthenes must be allowed to develop their nationality and to use their language in office and in schools. If sporadic voices were raised for polonizing them these were always combated by eminent Polish politicians. The germanization and russification which had been directed against the Poles were not forgotten.

The Ruthenes, however, stood on a considerably lower level than the Poles in culture and in linguistic development. They had few literary or educated men, and their political methods were primitive. Hence an understanding between them and the Poles was in practice immensely difficult. The St Jurist party, the Old Ruthenes, indeed, looked to incorporation in Russia. Of this the Poles could not think calmly, for it would signify the ruin of the Polish element throughout the eastern portion of the country, as well as of the religious Union.

From 1873, however, the St Jurist influence weakened, and the Little Russian party began to gather strength. This proclaimed the separateness of the Little Russian language and nationality from the Russian, thus far gaining the sympathy of the Poles, who made several attempts at a Polish-Ruthene understanding. Radicals professing agrarian socialism, however, were victorious among the Little Russians. Desiring the extermination of the Polish element in the east as far as the river San, they attacked it with agricultural strikes, outrages, personal violence and political murder. In 1908 the Viceroy, Andrew Potocki, was murdered during an audience by the Ruthene Siczynski, although he sincerely favoured a Polish-Ruthene understanding and supported the spread of Ruthene education. Thus, as often in primitive societies, the policy of "all or nothing" triumphed among the leaders of the Ruthene masses. Opposing any attempts at

agreement with the Poles, they embraced the policy of hurling them "over the San", meanwhile engaging in no relations save terror and violence.

The danger began in 1900 to convince the Poles in eastern Galicia that the Little Russian movement must be combated without restraint. Which, men asked, was the more unprofitable for them, the socialist movement of the "Ukrainians", the name now assumed by the Ruthene nationalists, or the Muscophil tendency, which was socially far more moderate? Bobrzyński, the successor of Potocki as Viceroy (1908-13), an expert in Ruthene history, actually fell because a considerable section of the Diet did not share his opinions on the Ruthene question. He was against an agreement with the Muscophiles, and an advocate of developing the national consciousness of the Little Russians.

Despite these doubts and difficulties, Ruthene culture rose with the growth of Ruthene schools. High schools and seminaries sprang up, but the nation lacked a university, for it had not sufficient learned men. Although in eastern Galicia the Ruthene language enjoyed equal rights and there was no thought of persecuting, the Ruthenes made incessant complaints to Vienna, and demanded intervention for their defence, judging this the way to gain the administrative partition of Galicia and a majority over the Poles. They therefore opposed the Poles in the struggle for enlarging autonomy, and in parliament the Ruthene Club always voted with the Germans. The Poles were undoubtedly weakened by their irreconcilable irredentism, but this did not bring positive profit to the Ruthenes. In these conditions a happy solution of the Ruthene question proved impossible. The agreement effected in 1913 for the reform of the Diet was a gleam of light amid the darkness.

The law for the direct election of the Council of the Realm made 1873 a date signifying the abandonment of the campaign for "separating" the country at one blow—an impossibility when the highest legislative authority was dominated by a centralist majority. The Polish deputies elected in 1873 therefore endeavoured to gain by another road the enlargement of autonomy and a decisive influence on the state. They attempted to form in the Council of the Realm a majority with the watchword of autonomy. This was an uphill road, since the German Centralist party was influential and tenacious. Its fall was caused immediately only by the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which the Berlin Congress of 1879 granted to Austria, in compensation for the increase of Russian influence over

the Balkan peninsula. The Liberal-Centralist party then in power opposed all Austrian military outlay and also the occupation of these two Turkish provinces. The Poles and the German Catholics supported the outlay and the occupation. Thus the centralist cabinet fell in 1879, and the Emperor turned to Baron Taaffe. Taaffe formed a majority of autonomists in the Council of the Realm by inducing the Czechs to join him in a government *bloc*, together with the German Catholics and Poles.

Thus arose the coalition known as the "iron ring", which ruled Austria from 1879 to 1891. It furnished a majority for autonomy, but not for the federal structure which the Czechs and Poles desired. Taaffe, a descendant of the Irish gentry, was a supple statesman endowed with Viennese good humour, who knew how to "muddle along" by removing stumbling-blocks without taking categorical decisions or stating principles. In this fashion he treated the question of autonomy and federation. The greatest figure in the cabinet and its soul, however, was the Pole, Julian Dunajewski (1880-91), a man of firm and decided character. At the Treasury, after a long and arduous struggle, he brought the ruined Austrian finances into equilibrium. For this he induced the countries, Galicia among them, to make heavy sacrifices, but he remedied more than one of the consequences of previous bad administration. By the regulation of the so-called "Indemnity question", he removed an immense danger, and enabled Galicia to reorganize her own finances by converting debt.

Poles also took office in later cabinets, after the "iron ring" had been broken and Taaffe resigned (1893). In the last years before the War, Leon Biliński was at the Treasury, as was in 1907 W. Korytowski, and in 1913 W. Zaleski. From 1895 to 1898 K. Badeni was Prime Minister, and at the turn of the century the son of Viceroy Gólurowski was Minister of Foreign Affairs. Poles were also Ministers of Education and of Communications. Moreover in every cabinet from 1873 to 1914 a "minister for Galicia", usually an eminent member of the Polish Club, safeguarded the interests of this greatest and most populous country of the crown. These statesmen proved, what Russians and Germans denied, that Poles had not lost their political traditions, though in the partitioning countries they had been everywhere excluded from an active share in politics. Poles, then, were not merely a race of poets and dreamers, but they could produce men fit to govern a great state as realism prescribed.

From 1860, new political parties sprang up and a rich political literature appeared. At first the largest and most important party



was the Conservative, divided into several sections, especially those of the western and eastern parts of the country. The western Conservatives, or Cracovians, were usually called *Stańczyks*, from a political pamphlet of 1869, "The Portfolio of *Stańczyk*", so named after the court fool of the last Jagellonians, who was renowned for shrewd criticism. The Cracovians differed from the eastern or Podolian Conservatives, both as to tactics and on such questions as the structure of the commune and the attitude to be assumed towards the Ruthenes. The Conservatives long predominated in the Diet and Polish Club. They furnished the early presidents of the Club, and therefore the leaders of Polish policy, as well as the Viceroy and the Marshal. Their chief supporters were the gentry or landowners, but the intellectual *élite*, the university professors, also belonged for the most part to their group. Their chief organ was *The Times (Czas)*, published from 1848 in Cracow. They were at first opposed only by the Democrats, whose party was chiefly supported by liberal and middle-class elements. In later years, the Democratic party became a Left of moderate political and social tendencies.

About 1900, the National Democrats, or All-Polish party, separated from the Democrats. They aimed at uniting the Poles from all three sectors under the common standard of a struggle for independence, and at renewing the battle for the separation of Galicia. By raising the cry of anti-semitism and of stern combat against the Ruthenes, they gained great popularity in eastern Galicia, both among the middle classes and the gentry.

About 1890, the first permanent Peasant party in Galicia appeared, showing that, thanks to the improvement in his means and education, the Galician peasant was beginning to take an active part in political life. At first several peasant parties competed among themselves in radicalism. From 1903 they were united in one great party—the Populists, who were joined by non-peasant politicians also. The number of peasant deputies rose steadily, for the peasants formed seventy per cent of the population. In 1914, before the War, the Populists took the symbolic title of Piasts, after the legendary peasant-founder of the Polish state.

From 1890 also, the Polish Socialist party (P.P.S.) was organized on Galician soil. It was chiefly a workmen's party, bent on emphasizing its nationalism as well as its socialism, in opposition to attempts at giving an international character to the socialist movement in Poland.

The Jews and Ruthenes also formed several parties. Jewish men of education sought shelter among other parties and declared for

assimilation. But they had little influence upon the Jewish masses. To these Chasidism, with its superstitious observance of the faith crystallized in the Talmud, made a greater appeal. About 1900 a nationalist Jewish party appeared in the "Zionists", who passionately opposed assimilation. The "Bund", or Radical-Socialist party, whose watchword was national judaism, also detached itself from the Chasid mass. The survival of "Jargon" (Yiddish) as their prevailing language tended to separate the Jews from the other peoples of the country.

The Ruthenes were divided between the Old Ruthene party (the former St Jurists) and the Little Russian party, who had lately taken the name of Ukrainians, to show their unity with the Ruthene subjects of the Tsar. They lived chiefly in the Ukraine, but also in Podolia and Volhynia. These parties were mutually hostile, agreeing only in their dislike for the Poles.

After the introduction of universal suffrage, the relative strength in the Polish camp in 1911 was as follows. Of 106 deputies from Galicia the Conservatives had 18; the Populists, 23; the Democrats, 14; the National Democrats, 10; the remainder (41) belonging to small groups. All these belonged to the Polish Club. There remained the group of Polish Socialists, with 7 members and 2 adherents. Of the Ruthenians 2 were Muscophils, 18 Ukrainians, and 6 Ruthenes inclined to socialism.

In Eastern Europe, 1873-1914 were years of growing rivalry between Austria and Russia. In 1877, during the Russo-Turkish war, and in 1887, the duel seemed very close at hand. From 1863 to 1904, persecution in Russia, designed to russify or even exterminate the Poles, made the Polish nation in all three sectors anti-Russian. Thus in Galicia fear and hatred of Russia held sway. In 1876, before the Russo-Turkish war, attempts were made to create a "Confederation of the Polish people". It was in fact an insignificant plot formed with the help of unofficial English agents, and designed to embarrass the Russian forces in Turkey. The weighty political circles in Galicia, however, objected to the formation of such conspiratory organizations, and the Confederation ended in fiasco.

Fear of Russia inclined the Polish Club to support the Austrian military budget. They declared for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, and even refrained from protesting when, in 1879, Austria became the ally of the German Empire, although they disliked an alliance which harnessed her to the chariot of the stronger power.

After the Russo-Japanese war, however, first in the Russian sector and afterwards in Galicia, the opinion gained ground that the most dangerous foes to Polish national development were not the Russians but the Germans, and that, in the approaching conflict between the German and Slavonic worlds, the Poles must side with Russia, after securing her concession of autonomy to the Polish Kingdom. Such was the watchword of the newly-formed National Democratic or All-Polish party, though in Galicia it was strongly opposed. There, indeed, it meant not only a breach with previous policy, but also a transition to support of the Old Ruthenes or Muscophils. The greater part of Polish society in Galicia therefore, on the eve of the Great War, declared for the maintenance of the anti-Russian trend, and ardently supported the forces preparing to fight against Russia for an independent Polish state.

In social structure, Galicia underwent a fundamental change between 1873 and 1914. When that period began, it was eminently a land dominated by the gentry. The class which had ruled Poland for centuries, and which possessed the strongest national consciousness, was the proper guardian of Polish culture and politically the most developed. Now it began more and more to lose importance. The Polish middle classes, chiefly massed in Cracow and Lwów, came into view, and claimed the right to collaborate in shaping the country's fate. In the towns the working-class increased, and was organized in strong trade unions. It was led by Socialists, often, like the famous people's tribune, Ignatius Daszyński, recruited from among the gentry. Most important of all, the farming class, numbering seventy per cent of the population, now entered into enlightened Polish society. Thanks to compulsory and universal schooling, it became far better educated than of old, and felt itself Polish. It filled the middle schools, entered the higher schools, produced officials, lawyers and doctors, and formed a reservoir for the rising third estate, that of *bourgeois* merchants and craftsmen. Work in the commune and county gave it a grounding in public life. Its deputies, in ever-growing numbers, shared in the labours of the Diet and the Polish Club, breaking the monopoly of the gentry. Such a monopoly, well-founded so long as the landowners alone were educated, by 1900 had become an anachronism.

At the same time the minute subdivision of the lands of the gentry, which in existing economic conditions was inevitable, diminished their wealth, and thus made their predominance ever harder to defend. It was impossible to maintain the *de facto* privilege of the

magnates or higher gentry, that of filling all the most important offices in the country, or to maintain the principle that a majority of the deputies should come from a single class.

Especially after 1907, when universal suffrage came in, it became more and more difficult to resist the pressure from the middle classes, the labourers and the workmen for a change in the antiquated system of election to the Diet, which dated from 1861. After Viceroy Potocki had been murdered by a Ruthene, his successor, Bobrzyński, desired, while war was irresistibly approaching, that electoral reform should be accompanied by a Polish-Ruthene settlement, and that the Populists should undertake the government. He foresaw that the war would be a great convulsion, and wished the Polish people to encounter it as a united body reconciled with the Ruthenes.

The struggle for electoral reform was passionate, and Bobrzyński resigned in 1913. Despite great difficulties, however, the reform was carried, *one cause of victory being a sham alliance between radical Populists and Roman Catholic bishops*. Thus on the eve of war Galicia reached a political compromise. A vast majority of the Poles had united against the policy of supporting Russia. In the years 1911 to 1914, moreover, military *cadres* were formed on Galician soil to facilitate a struggle against Russia in a future war. Ever since the Japanese victory in 1905, the ardent Polish youth had engaged in half-secret plots to raise in time of war the cry of independence and to overthrow Russian rule in Poland. As the Russian menace in the Balkans and in eastern Galicia brought Austria ever nearer war, this movement gathered strength. Secret at first, then open, it was led by Joseph Piłsudski, who settled in Cracow in 1911. He organized it with the help of the Austrian authorities, but its motto was the conquest of Polish independence.

Thus the Great War came as no sudden surprise. The country knew that on its result the future of the nation would depend. The cry of independence which accompanied it was justified by half a century of work for the re-birth of the nation. Democratization by drawing all classes into political activity, increase in wealth and education, efficiency through training in work, social, political and economic, the formation of *cadres* for the future army and civil service—such were the gains which at the moment of its restoration, Galicia could devote to a Poland rising from partition.

The above account does not entirely cover the part played by Galicia at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There were times when both Russia and Prussia struck brutally at the

Polish nation. In their sectors there were no Polish schools, the Polish language was excluded from official use, the faith was persecuted, Polish agents were imprisoned or exiled to Siberia, among the masses every whisper of Polish separation was suppressed. Just at those times, through those years, the national idea radiated through the rest of Poland from Galicia. There Polish learning and art were concentrated, there patriots persecuted in Prussia and Russia found shelter, there scholars and artists lived and worked, who in their own sector could not find subsistence. In spite of prohibitions and persecutions, Poles from the other sectors maintained the most active relations with Galicia. Great national solemnities like the burial of Mickiewicz in the cathedral on the Wawel in 1895, or the quincenary of the Jagiello university in Cracow in 1900, brought crowd of participants from all the sectors and strengthened their comprehension of the national traditions, of the continued vitality of the people and the possibility of preserving its existence. Thus the Austrian sector had throughout this period the character of a focus for all Poland and contributed in great measure to frustrate every effort to russify and germanize both the other sectors.





## CHAPTER XX

### THE POLISH QUESTION DURING THE WORLD WAR

#### A. MILITARY EFFORTS AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE POLES

THE Great War, although it did not come without sending warning signals before it, found the Polish nation very imperfectly prepared. The National Democrats on the one hand and the Polish Socialist Party on the other had, in their several ways, endeavoured to reawaken a consciousness of common aims. But among the rank and file, even of the town population, the idea of a struggle for national reunion and deliverance had tended to become dormant, and the slogan of a reborn free Poland was only used rhetorically on holiday occasions in self-governing Austrian Poland, where such demonstrations were possible.

Moreover, the soldierly spirit, once prominent in a nation doomed by its geographical position to endless wars, was outwardly less conspicuous. Since 1863 the idea of another rising was universally abhorred; military service in the armies of the partitioning powers—even under Austria—was a painful and unpopular necessity; and the training of a new Polish armed force was not seriously contemplated save by a romantic few.

Yet another circumstance made the War, as it came at last, a bewildering surprise to Poland. Ever since the partitions, through a century and more, Polish public opinion had become accustomed to a constant community of interest between Prussia and Russia towards the Polish problem; in the suppression by Russia of all the Polish insurrections Prussia had more or less actively collaborated; and anti-Polish methods in the two Empires had developed on parallel lines. It seemed unimaginable that a war between Germany and Russia should ever be waged on Polish ground, and that the possession of Polish lands should be one of its objects. And yet the unimaginable happened: Poles not only saw German and Russian armies pitted against each other on Polish soil, but were obliged to fight each other in the uniforms of the opposing powers.

Yet there was then one man in Poland who, long before, had faced the realities of the Polish situation, and the contingencies inherent in



international relations, with clear insight and unflinching resolution. That man was Joseph Piłsudski. Something will be said elsewhere of his early activities within the Polish Socialist Party. From the very beginning of his membership of the Party, of which he soon was the acknowledged leader, he had worked to turn it into an instrument of Polish national aspirations and to use the revolutionary methods of the Socialist conspirators as a training for his fellow-workers in insurrection. After the suppression of the revolutionary movement of 1905 by Russian reaction he had made the new "League of Active Struggle", founded by his fellow-worker and later Chief of Staff, K. Sosnkowski, the centre of endeavours to create the nucleus of a future Polish army. For these endeavours he had found support in Austrian governing circles, as Austria was already preparing for the coming conflict with Russia. In this manner "Associations of Riflemen" had come into existence in Austrian Poland several years before the War, with material assistance from the authorities. They were soon paralleled by similar semi-military organizations emanating from other political centres than Piłsudski's Socialist Party: "Riflemen's Unions" under different names were formed by student organizations called "Embers" (*Zarzewie*), by the Nationalists within the framework of the Gymnastic Society called "Falcon" (*Sokol*), and by the Populists from among the peasants. In 1912, even a "Temporary Committee of the Confederate Independentist Parties" came into being and attempted such international activities as the presentation of a memoir on the Polish problem to the Ambassadors' Conference in London in 1913, which, immersed in Balkan affairs, ignored the appeal. The "Committee", representing predominantly the groups of the Left, did not enjoy wide support, and its endeavour to create a "Military Treasury" out of voluntary contributions yielded only very modest results.

In spite of the fact that his man-power and material resources were insignificant, Piłsudski did not hesitate to take action when the War broke out. Contrary to many senior citizens, who advocated an attitude of neutral expectation and of prudent economy of national forces, he was clear that the Poles at this critical moment of history ought to appear as an active party upon the scene of events, if they wished their national claims to be considered at the end of the War. Nor was his resolution paralysed by the doubts which exercised the minds of most of his fellow-Poles as to the side to take. There was, indeed, much to be said against either political "orientation". Siding with the Central Powers meant supporting not only Austria, the one partitioning power to give them complete provincial self-government, but

also her predominant partner Germany, who had used every kind of administrative, educational and economic pressure to germanize her Polish provinces. Again, the anti-German Western Allies had old claims on the Poles, having often shown sympathy for their national aspirations; but to side with the Allies meant to side with Russia, who had brutally oppressed her Polish subjects.

For Piłsudski, whose younger days had been spent in the atmosphere of bitter struggle against Russian tyranny, and who had lately met with support from Austria, there was no doubt as to the course to choose: with the handful of his first soldiers, he took the field against Russia, firmly convinced that only through the defeat of the largest sharer in the spoils of the old Poland lay the road to deliverance. That he did not thereby intend to tie Poland's fortunes to the military destinies of Germany was to become apparent later, but at the time his resolute action drew down on him from his less far-sighted adversaries the reproach of pro-Germanism, which long remained a favourite weapon in all the bitter attacks to which he was later exposed.

On the historic dawn of 6 August 1914 Piłsudski's first small band of ill-armed soldiers from the several pre-war military formations—the cavalrymen being provided with saddles but not with horses, the infantry armed mostly with obsolete one-cartridge rifles, and no artillery at all—marched out of Cracow, crossed the frontier of Russian Poland, and soon occupied the town of Kielce "in the name of free and independent Poland". In spite of the small size of his force—five battalions all told—this action meant as important a *fait accompli* as did, say, the first victory of Kościuszko's peasant soldiers at Racławice near Cracow in 1794.

In the meantime, the Polish representation in the Austrian Parliament had made a declaration of loyalty to Austria as early as 2 August. Under Russia, the Polish deputies in the Duma had addressed a similar declaration to the Russian Government on 5 August; on 14 August, their action was rewarded by a manifesto of the Russian commander-in-chief to the Poles, promising reunion of all Polish lands under Russian rule and limited self-government. This, in turn, called forth enthusiastic addresses from some of the political parties of Russian Poland, notably the National Democrats, who, with Roman Dmowski at their head, had for some time co-operated with the constitutional forces in Russia and looked upon Germany as the most dangerous enemy to Polish nationality.

On the Austro-Polish side, the military initiative of Piłsudski made action imperative, although Austria had not promulgated any

programme on the Polish issue. Some political authority was necessary if Piłsudski's soldiers were not to be treated as mere irregulars both by the Central Powers and by the enemy. In the middle of August, the President of the Polish Party in the Vienna Parliament, Professor J. Leo, Mayor of Cracow, assembled all the Austro-Polish deputies at Cracow, and at this meeting, in which leading non-Parliamentary "Independentist" politicians also took part, it was unanimously decided to create a "Supreme National Committee" (*N.K.N.*) as a political organ superintending all Polish volunteers for Austria. The Polish troops received the historic name of "Legions"—assumed in 1797 by Napoleon's first Polish soldiers in Italy—and they were to form two bodies of the size of brigades, a Western and an Eastern. An agreement was soon concluded with Austria, guaranteeing to the legionaries the privileges of combatants, the use of Polish emblems and of the Polish language, and equipment and maintenance at her expense. Two Austrian generals of Polish race commanded the troops, whose first strength was fixed at 20,000. Piłsudski was appointed commander of the first regiment of foot. An enlisting campaign was begun among young men not already obliged to serve; and offerings in money and in kind were soon forthcoming from the Austro-Polish community.

The action of the Austro-Polish National Committee was expressly declared not to be binding on Russian Poland for the time being; yet a determined protest was soon raised against it by the parties which had expressed their enthusiasm for the manifesto of the Grand Duke Nicholas, and that protest, reaching Cracow across the front, produced disunion in the National Committee. The defeat of the Austrians, culminating in the occupation of Lwów by the Russians, caused the politicians of Eastern Galicia—mostly National Democrats in party allegiance or sympathy—to secede from the Committee, and even before their secession, to induce the Eastern Legion to dissolve. The discouraging attitude of the Austrian Supreme Command towards the Austro-Polish population also diminished the popularity of the Committee, and the sympathies of the public were in part diverted towards the humanitarian and non-political activities of a War Relief Committee founded at Cracow by Archbishop Prince Adam Sapieha, and of a similar Committee of larger scope and international scale led at Vevey in Switzerland by the great novelist Sienkiewicz, the pianist Paderewski, and a philanthropic Warsaw lawyer, A. Osuchowski. The Cracow National Committee, which, after the secession of the National Democrats, had become somewhat Radical, regained

some of its authority when a prominent Conservative, Professor W. L. Jaworski, assumed its presidency; but, apart from permission to conduct propaganda and enlisting activities in occupied Russian Poland, it made little headway.

Meanwhile the Legions, into which Piłsudski's nucleus of an armed force had developed, having held the Vistula line at Nowy Korczyn, fought in some heavy rearguard actions during the Austrian retreat from Dęblin. The legionaries, who had returned to Cracow after a daring march between advancing Russian lines at Ulina Mała, were next employed in protecting the right flank of the Austrians in the hilly region south-east of Cracow, and fought with distinction first at Limanowa, then further north at Łowczówek near Tarnów (22-25 December). As Russian forces, having crossed the Carpathians, were descending into the Hungarian plain, the newly-formed second brigade of the Legions was moved eastward along the southern slope of the mountains to oppose them. They threw the Russians back across the mountains, built a road across the Pantyr Pass, and entered South-eastern Galicia, where they fought stubbornly, with heavy losses, at Mołotkowo (29 October), and, during November, in difficult uplands round Rafajłowa. The new year, 1915, brought to one group on this front some equally hard fighting in the hills about Kirlibaba in the Bukovina; to another, a share in the Austrian offensive against the town of Stanisławów. In the spring, after a short much-needed rest, and two months of trench fighting on the river Nida, Piłsudski's brigade took part in the decisive Austro-German offensive after Mackensen's victory at Gorlice in May, and showed its seasoned fighting qualities in a prolonged action of several days at Konary. The Legions also conducted from Piotrków, throughout former Russian Poland, a recruiting campaign which met with more sympathy than at the beginning of the War. In the meantime, the second brigade, remaining in the South-eastern Carpathians, continued to fight in the Bukovina, and soon added a glorious chapter to the rich record of Poland's brilliant cavalry charges, by the historic attack at Rokitno (13 June 1915), where a squadron of the Legions' recently-formed cavalry assailed four heavily fortified lines of Russian trenches and captured them all, losing its commander and most of the men. Soon after that, all the regiments of the Legions were at last united on the Volhynian front, along the rivers Stochod and Styr, where the Russians had succeeded in halting the Austro-German advance. Here, in a roadless region of swamps, streams, and forests, the Legions had to fight under conditions not less difficult than those of the mountain

campaign in their first year. The fighting round the town of Kowel, largely guerilla warfare, won the praise of the Austro-German command. A subsequent period of trench warfare made its centre, the village of Kostiuchnówka, a household word in Polish military history, and caused a hill, for which battalions of the Legions fought repeatedly and heroically, to be christened by the Germans "Polish hill". The comparative quiet of the winter was used by Piłsudski to emphasize the Polish and independent character of his force.

In Russian Poland, a "National Committee" under Dmowski and Count Sigismund Wielopolski had been formed in the early months of the War, to work for Polish national aims in collaboration with Russia and the western Allies. Russia, however, while jealously maintaining, in her relations with the Allies, the principle that it was a domestic issue of the Russian Empire, made no definite move in the Polish question during the first year of the War, while her Polish province was still in her hands. The Duma was only called upon to grant very limited municipal self-government, and even this bill was never made effective. On the other hand, the treatment of occupied Eastern Galicia as "ancient Russian soil" without regard to its five centuries of unbroken Polish tradition, was bound to increase the disappointment of the Poles.

When the tide on the eastern front definitely turned in the spring of 1915, a "Central Civic Committee" (*C.K.O.*) for the whole province, and a special one for Warsaw, were formed to ensure public order. The Warsaw Committee was presided over by Prince Zdzisław Lubomirski, who was soon to become, as mayor of Warsaw under German occupation, as popular in Poland as burgomaster Max of Brussels in Belgium. The Warsaw Committee organized an administration and a volunteer constabulary in the capital. The Central Civic Committee, under W. Grabski, transferred its activities into Eastern Poland and afterwards into Russia. It was later to organize relief and other social services for the masses of exiles driven out of the eastern provinces into the interior of Russia by her retreating armies—a task which it shared with the local circles of the "Polish Society of Assistance to Victims of the War" all over Russia.

The behaviour of Russia had been such that a swing of the pendulum of public opinion in favour of the Austro-German occupants after the taking of Warsaw might have been expected. Nothing, however, was done by the Central Powers to bring about such a change. Germany and Austria remained as mute as Russia on the essential issue of

Poland's national future; and the measures taken immediately after the occupation of the rest of Russian Poland did not encourage high political hopes. The German and the Austrian sectors of the occupied territory were kept strictly distinct from each other; administration was organized on a predominantly military basis; in the civil service the Austrians employed some Poles; the Germans, none; economically, a period of ruthless requisition of raw materials and of the dismantling of industrial establishments set in, especially in the German sector; the unemployed were packed off in thousands to the mines and factories of Germany. Such organs of central self-government as Polish initiative had created on the eve of the Russian withdrawal were dissolved; municipal self-government in the country towns and rural districts was by appointment; most Polish jurists declined the very limited concessions made in the organization of the judiciary; and the re-establishment of a Polish University in Warsaw—which had existed there since 1817, but became Russian in the later nineteenth century—was the only considerable concession to national aspirations.

In the sphere of politics proper, there was evident friction between the Austrians and Germans as to the future of Poland. Disappointment and impatience led to increasing disunion and controversy, not merely among the Polish political organizations behind the Austro-German front, but also among Piłsudski's Legions.

The Legions, having wintered in trenches on the Volhynian front, were fighting hard again in the spring and early summer of 1916, when Russia began the great Brusilov offensive. A fortified outpost named "Piłsudski's Redoubt", near Kostiuchnówka, was attacked by huge Russian forces, and its defence did much to blunt the edge of the Russian onslaught; renewed and equally hard fighting at Rudka Miryńska on the river Stochod led up to more trench warfare in the autumn. It was at that moment, late in September 1916, that Piłsudski decided to resign the command of the Legions, and many of his best soldiers followed his example. This was, under the circumstances, the strongest possible manifestation of Polish discontent with the occupying powers.

At last, under the pressure of checks and reverses on other fronts, and of the growing need for new reserves, the Central Powers resolved, late in 1916, on a bid for popularity in former Russian Poland (where Russia had left something like a million men unmobilized), by proclaiming, on 5 November, the creation of an independent Poland. It was a Poland reconstituted on a very small scale, like Napoleon's Duchy of Warsaw, consisting only of part of Russian Poland. Its

frontiers were not strictly defined and its form of government was only described as "hereditary and constitutional Monarchy". Some form of union with both Austria and Germany was anticipated; and it was under their joint control that the army of the new political unit was to be organized, administered, and used. This meant discomfiture for those Austro-Polish politicians who had dreamed of a larger Poland, consisting of the Russian and the Austrian sector at least, and bound to the Austrian Empire by the same sort of equal dynastic union as the Kingdom of Hungary. The disappointment was only slightly mitigated by a vague promise of fuller autonomy for Austrian Galicia. Prussian Poland was promised nothing; and maintained the same attitude of stubborn reserve which it had observed since the beginning of the War.

By large sections of Austro-Polish opinion, and by portions of the public in former Russian Poland, the Austro-German act of 5 November 1916 was welcomed. It was a possible earnest of more to come and, above all, was the first express recognition, by any belligerent, of Poland's claims to political independence. The stimulating effect of this was seen in an Army Order of the Tsar and a conversation with Count Wielopolski, both promising self-government with a parliament and an army. In view of the complete futility of Russia's half-hearted undertakings, however, Dmowski henceforward staked his hopes entirely on the western Allies, and went to England, where he began a strenuous campaign on behalf of the Polish cause. Among the Poles who remained in Russia, a political group headed by Alexander Lednicki, a prominent Moscow lawyer and member of the first Duma, took the ground that a Polish State, however embryonic, was created by the Austro-German act, and that all political action on the part of "emigrants" must now be correlated with what was going on in Poland itself.

Events in Poland, however, took an unpromising course. The Legions, indeed, had been renamed "the Polish Auxiliary Corps"; but there was still no Polish government to control them, and Piłsudski was right in stating in a letter to the Rector of the new University of Warsaw that he "could not conceive an army without a government". Voluntary recruitment yielded next to no results. Something more, it was felt, had to be done. The German Governor-General of Warsaw, von Beseler, on his own initiative, announced the creation of an elected Parliament and an appointed Council of State. This was followed by an Austro-German decree forming a Council of State on a somewhat different basis, but making no mention of a

Parliament. The Council of State, composed of twenty-five members appointed by the occupying powers, met in January 1917. Its functions were to be advisory, organizing and administrative, but subject in their entirety to the consent of Commissioners of the occupying powers. Polish opinion in former Russian Poland was, by that time, sharply divided between "activists", willing to co-operate with the Central Powers, and "passivists", who refused all such co-operation. At first, an "Inter-Party Council", representing all the larger political groups in the country, had persistently opposed co-operation. Now even "passivists" agreed to co-operate with the new Council of State in matters of constructive political organization. The Council, indeed, branched out into Departments and Commissions, but their projects were largely disregarded, and executive power in the two areas of occupation remained exclusively vested in the Austrian and German military authorities.

Piłsudski, who was a member of the Council of State and had organized a provisional Ministry of War within its framework, wished to form the army through a widespread subsidiary organization which he had himself called into being as early as 1914 under the name of "Polish Military Organization" (*P.O.W.*). This had done difficult and dangerous secret service (conducted in part by women) in intelligence and partisan activities behind the Russian front. Prominent among these heroic women was Piłsudski's second wife Alexandra, *née* Szczerbińska, afterwards joint-authoress of a book of memoirs describing these activities. This organization was now for a time allowed to act openly. Soon, however, Piłsudski's plans for the organization of the army were thwarted. His Legions, which had at last been allowed ceremonially to enter Warsaw soon after the November act of 1916, were, early in 1917, surrendered by Austria in form to the Council of State, but in fact to German control. Staffed with German officers as instructors, they were now to become absorbed into a "Polish Armed Force" (*Polnische Wehrmacht*), for which the Germans solemnly began to enlist recruits in April 1917. Apart from these measures, much friction—not merely between Poles and Germans, but also between Austrian and German authorities—was caused by the proposed withdrawal of Austrian subjects from the "Polish Armed Force", and by the form of the oath which its soldiers were to take, which was to contain a commitment to "brotherhood in arms" with the Austro-German armies. It was the "oath crisis" that brought the dilemma faced by Piłsudski into full light. Was he to avail himself of the opportunity to create, at first under German control, a Polish army



on a larger scale which might come to be used not for German but for purely Polish ends; or was he to refuse to the occupants that toll of Polish blood which increasing military necessity drove them to exact? The opinions of Piłsudski's superior officers were divided. Supporters of the idea of wide recruitment and temporary submission to German control were not wanting. Piłsudski, who had always thought in terms of ultimate independence of Austria and Germany, and had secretly worked in that direction for some time past, now after careful consideration took his momentous decision of refusing to sacrifice more young Poles to the Central Powers. Rather than build up a larger army at that price, he chose to continue his work with the help of his "Polish Military Organization". The organization became illegal and secret again; its task was henceforth to make preparations for shaking off the German yoke.

As a sign of going into opposition, Piłsudski resigned his seat in the Council of State, and he was followed by all the members of the Council who belonged to the parties of the Left. When soon afterwards the Germans ordered the Legions to take the oath, the whole of the first brigade, formerly under the command of Piłsudski, and the major part of the third, refused. Thereupon the Germans interned those who were of Russian-Polish birth in prison camps—the officers at Benjaminów, the men at Szczypiorno. Austrian subjects were distributed among different units of the Austro-Hungarian army on the Italian front. Piłsudski himself and his Chief of Staff, K. Sosnkowski, were arrested on 22 July 1917, and confined in the German fortress of Magdeburg till the end of the War. What remained of the Legions was returned to Austria, and sent by her to its old section of the front—the banks of the Prut in Bukovina.

These dramatic events caused the resignation of the remaining members of the Council of State in a body. A chapter in the domestic history of Poland in war-time had come to its close.

In 1917 revolution broke out in Russia, and soon swept away the monarchy. Tsardom, so long the principal factor in Poland's oppression, having fallen, new prospects seemed to open up for the Poles in that quarter. The first revolutionary government, composed of moderate Liberals, mostly Russian Imperialists, was hardly inclined, on its own initiative, to be outspoken on the subject of Poland's independence. But some discreet pressure seems to have been brought to bear by the ambassadors of the Allies, and on 30 March 1917, the government issued a manifesto proclaiming Poland's right to inde-

pendence and constitutional self-determination, with the sole proviso of a "free military convention" to be concluded between the Polish State and Russia. Although Russia had lost all her Polish possessions, this act was hailed by Polish opinion as a considerable step forward. It was followed by action within the limited sphere of Russia's possibilities; Lednicki was placed at the head of a special Commission for the "liquidation" of legal and property relations between Russia and Poland.

At the same time, a spontaneous movement arose among the many thousand Poles who served in the Russian army, for segregation into national Polish units. A small volunteer body, "the Legion of Puławy", had been formed on the Russian side in 1914 and fought in 1915. A larger Polish unit, the "Polish Rifle Brigade", had come into existence later and developed into a division, but the Russians had not allowed them to assume the distinct character of Polish troops. *Isolated small cavalry units consolidated and grew into a Polish regiment of lancers, which had its day of glory in the summer of 1917 when, during the retreat after Kerensky's unsuccessful offensive, it saved Stanisławów from pillage by Russian marauders, and soon after by bold counter-attacks at the village of Krechowce, held up, at great sacrifice, large forces of advancing Germans. In memory of these heroes the first regiment of lancers in the Polish army bore the name "The Lancers of Krechowce".*

In the meantime, soon after the outbreak of the revolution, an "Association of Polish Soldiers" had been formed at Petrograd, and, as the movement spread all over Russia, it developed into a tendency to form separate Polish military bodies by secession from the Russian ranks. Polish opinion in Russia was far from unanimous on such action, the Lednicki group being opposed to it. Yet the instinctive enthusiasm of the majority of the soldiers for the idea of a Polish army carried the day. A special Polish army corps, under General J. Dowbór-Muśnicki, was formed in White Ruthenia, and a second, under General Henning-Michaelis, later under General Stankiewicz, in the Ukrainian south, out of Polish soldiers of the Russian armies on the Rumanian front. A third corps was built up out of scattered local groups of partisans and likewise concentrated in the Ukraine. These several bodies for a time held their own in the welter of Russian events; they defended the estates of Polish landlords against outbreaks of anarchy by the White Ruthenian and Ukrainian peasant masses, and they even organized an independent Polish administration in portions of Russian-Polish border territory. These tasks, however,

kept the Polish forces dispersed and were not conducive to that concentration in larger masses which would have made them important in military and political events. Finally, all three Polish corps, finding themselves in a hopeless position between the growing hostility of revolutionary Russia and the steady advance of powerful German and Austrian forces, had to submit to disarmament by the Germans—the Second Corps not without a heroic struggle.

Meanwhile, the Polish problem was at last beginning to receive due attention from the western Allies. This was the fruit of the activities since 1915 of Dmowski in England, and of E. Piltz's Polish Press Agency in Switzerland. Other similar organizations were conducted partly by politicians differing in their views from Dmowski, and it was in neutral Switzerland that Polish politicians from both sides of the front first met for conferences in 1916 and 1917. In August 1917, Dmowski and his political associates founded a "Polish National Committee" at Lausanne which soon became established in Paris, obtained official recognition from all the Allied powers before the end of the year, and was allowed to appoint representatives in their capitals. One of its aims was to create a Polish army on the side of the Allies. An early formation—the so-called "Bayonne Legion"—had fought in the French army in 1914 and perished almost to a man. But the idea of a Polish armed force on the western Allied front did not die with them: it was kept alive by an eminent Polish writer resident in France, W. Gąsiorowski, and by others. At last, after the November Act of the Central Powers in 1916 and the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Allies admitted that the time had come for its realization. Two months before the organization of the National Committee, the French President authorized the formation of a larger body of Polish troops under French command.

In the political as well as in the military sense it was not in Western Europe but in the United States of America that the activities of Polish patriots first brought forth definite results. The indefatigable efforts of Paderewski first won the sympathy of Colonel House, and through him, of President Wilson, for the Polish cause. Wilson's inclusion of a free Poland among his first peace conditions, launched while America was still neutral (22 January 1917), found a wide echo both within Poland and outside.

In Poland, the occupying powers had in the meantime found it necessary to make gestures of conciliation. Austria appointed a general of Polish race, S. Szeptycki, governor-general of the Austrian sector of occupied Russian Poland. But even the Poles of the Austrian

sector were no longer to be appeased by small concessions. The Professors of the University of Cracow, backed by many of their colleagues at Lwów, in a memoir addressed to the Polish representation in the Vienna Parliament, declared for the reunion and independence of all Polish lands. A like resolution was unanimously voted by a full meeting of Austro-Polish deputies at Cracow on 28 May 1917.

The Germans, after the resignation of the Council of State, had entrusted to a Commission left behind by it the entire administration of schools and of courts of law in the occupied territory. They next, by a joint patent with Austria in September 1917, created a more extended apparatus of government for the whole of former Russian Poland. The Council of State was to be reconstituted on a basis of election, but with the same limited powers, advisory rather than legislative, as before. The constitutional functions of Head of the State were to be temporarily assumed by a Regency Council of three, to be appointed by the occupying authorities. This meant a considerable advance in the direction of self-government; but the realization of the scheme presented some difficulties, owing to the continued abstention of large political groups—the Nationalist Right and, since Piłsudski's imprisonment, also the Socialist Left. At last, a Regency Council was formed, consisting of the popular Mayor of Warsaw, Prince Zdzisław Lubomirski, the Warsaw Archbishop Alexander Kakowski, and a representative of the landowning class, Joseph Ostrowski; and a cabinet of ministers, with Jan Kucharzewski at its head, was constituted.

While the Regency Council were conducting wearisome negotiations with the Central Powers concerning the selection of a dynastic ruler for Poland, and the friction between shifting Austrian and German conceptions of a solution of the Polish problem continued, an entirely new international situation was created by the "October revolution" in Russia, whereby the Bolsheviks seized power. Germany had already begun to carve "buffer states", to be her vassals, out of the eastern border provinces of the historical Polish Monarchy: she had set up a government in Lithuania, and was favouring the aspirations of Ukrainian nationalism in the south-east of former Russian Poland. Now a greater danger faced the territory of Poland proper, when negotiations for a separate peace between Germany and the new Communist government of Russia began at Brześć on the Bug (Russian, Brest-Litovsk) in December 1917. Poland was denied the representation which she had asked for; and although the negotiations with Russia broke down at first, a peace with the Ukrainian Soviet

Republic was concluded on 9 February 1918. One of its conditions was the cession to the Soviet Ukraine by the Central Powers of the province of Chełm, which had always been considered by Poles as an inalienable part of the central lands of Poland, and whose administrative separation from the body of Russian Poland in 1912 had been branded by Polish opinion as a "fourth partition of Poland". Now a similar act was being committed by the Austrian Foreign Minister, Count Czernin, and it called forth a storm of indignation throughout Poland. The railwaymen went on strike; trade and industry came to a standstill; there were demonstrations of protest in the towns, and the Austrian administrative officials of Polish nationality took part in them. The Polish representatives in the Parliaments of Berlin and of Vienna also protested; the governor-general of the Austrian sector of the occupied territory, General Szeptycki, resigned with the whole of his administrative staff. Prime Minister Kucharczyński likewise tendered his resignation, and even the question of a resignation of the Regency Council was considered. But the most significant manifestation of all was perhaps the action taken by the remainder of the Polish Legions, then stationed on the border of Bessarabia, and commanded by General Zieliński, with Colonel Joseph Haller as brigadier. This body decided to sever its ties with the Central Powers and to wander forth into the chaos of revolutionary Russia, where they knew other Polish troops to be forming, rather than tacitly assent to the new dismemberment of Poland. Part of them were prevented by superior Austrian forces at the last moment from carrying out their resolution, and were interned at Huszt and at Marmaros-Sziget in Hungary. But part, after a skirmish at Rarańcza, on 15 February 1918, succeeded in quitting the Austro-German front line, and united their forces with the Polish Second Corps on the Russian side of the front. After a joint march across a large portion of the Ukraine, they were surrounded by German troops on the Dnieper. The battle of Kaniów which ensued (11 May 1918) was fought by them with honour, but owing to lack of munitions and the hopeless general situation, it ended in their disarmament. Portions of the force, including its commander, Joseph Haller, managed, with the self-sacrificing assistance of fellow-Poles in Russia, to reach the Murman peninsula, whence Haller and some of his soldiers went by sea to France to join the Polish army there. The rest united with an Allied expeditionary force assisting the "White" Russian armies against Bolshevism. The Poles took part in the capture of Archangel, in the fighting on the Northern Dvina, and in the offensive on the Onega front.

The Murman venture was not the only Odyssey of Polish soldiers in Russia during the early years of Bolshevism. The three Army Corps organized out of Russian soldiers of Polish nationality in 1917, though ultimately disarmed by the Germans, were luckily near enough to the border to reach Poland while the civil war in Russia was still in its early stages. Other Polish formations on Russian soil were less fortunate. A regiment formed in Moscow, to protect Polish national property there, was forcibly disarmed and dispersed in 1918. A body formed at Odessa, reaching almost the size of a separate army corps, after negotiations with Russian, Austrian, and Ukrainian occupants in turn, was obliged to demobilize in 1918, and its soldiers made their way to Poland, together with civilians, by way of Rumania.

Still greater, on account of the huge distance, were the difficulties encountered by a Polish brigade which had been formed of Russian soldiers on the Russo-Turkish front in the Caucasus. For a time, the Polish formation was the mainstay of order and security at Tiflis, under the newly formed Georgian government, which was trying to hold its own amidst the seething conflicts with the other local nationalities: Russian and Ukrainian Cossacks, Armenians, Tartars, Persians, and Kurds. The German occupation of May 1918 made the services of the Poles unnecessary: they were disbanded and returned home by small groups, either by way of Odessa or of the far north, where some of them joined the Murman force.

Yet another Polish formation arose in 1918 on the northern side of the Caucasus, in the region of the Kuban, south of the Don. The Poles took part with the "White" Russian troops against the Bolsheviks and, under an agreement with their leader General Denikin, were organized into a division, and later into a brigade, under General L. Żeligowski. At the end of 1918, the brigade was transferred to Odessa. Here it was included in the Allied and "White" Russian forces then attempting to hold this corner of South Russia against the Bolsheviks and against Petlura's Ukrainians. Thus the Polish soldiers were kept fighting for a foreign cause far away from home at the very time when a Polish State was arising and needed their services. It was only when the Allies decided, in April 1919, to abandon Odessa, that Żeligowski's soldiers were at last allowed to enter Poland. They arrived late in June 1919, in time to take part in the fighting with the Ukrainians for the possession of Eastern Galicia.

More unfortunate even than these formations in the Russian civil war was the "Siberian division". The troops out of which it developed were originally formed on the Volga, in the summer of 1918, in con-

nection with the Czechoslovak volunteer movement, and they fought the Bolsheviks, during the following winter, on the Ural front, near Ufa, side by side with "White" Russian forces and with the Czechs. After the breakdown of operations on the European side, the Polish troops were transferred into Western Siberia, to Novo-Nikolayevsk on the Ob (now Novo-Sybirsk). Here their numbers soon rose to a full division by influxes from volunteer formations in all parts of Asiatic Russia, both of former soldiers of the Russian armies and of prisoners of war from the Austro-German ranks transported to Siberia in the early years of the war. The Siberian division was commanded by W. Czuma, an officer of Haller. The Allies, having sent the French General Janin to Siberia to command the Czech, Polish, and other volunteer formations, used them as the instrument of their new scheme of supporting the Siberian government of Admiral Koltchak against the Bolsheviks. The Polish and three Czech divisions held a large portion of the Trans-Siberian railway and its branch lines as long as the Koltchak government lasted. When that government collapsed the Czechoslovaks retreated eastward to Vladivostok. The Poles had to fight several battles on the railway line under the atrocious conditions of a rigorous Russian winter, and finally found themselves outflanked and further retreat impossible. Only a small part of the division escaped, to form the nucleus of a new "Siberian division" in the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920; the majority, over 10,000 officers and men, had to pay for their Siberian venture by surrender near Krasnoyarsk and by two terrible years of Bolshevik captivity: thousands died, and the rest only returned to Poland, in 1921 and 1922, after the conclusion of the Peace of Riga between Poland and the Soviets.

The fortunes and misfortunes of the Polish military formations in Russia were thus prolonged for several years after the World War. In the meantime, on the European scene, political and military events were rapidly approaching their climax.

The Regency Council, having appointed a new Prime Minister, J. K. Steczkowski, and secured the able services of Prince Janusz Radziwiłł for foreign relations, endeavoured to create semi-diplomatic representations in some foreign capitals. Contact was established with Poles in Russia, where Lednicki acted as the Warsaw government's political agent. But he was not able to hold out long against Bolshevik methods, and soon lost his official standing. The Regency Council proved incapable of saving any of the Polish military formations in

Russia. In the country itself, elections for the new Council of State yielded such a large proportion of opponents to the policy of co-operation with the occupying powers that the overthrow of the Steczkowski cabinet was one of the first events of the session. But little attention was by that time being paid to the activities of the political organs of occupied Poland: everybody was following, with the keenest anxiety, the events in the West, where the future destiny of Poland was about to be decided.

The coming of Bolshevism in Russia had set the Allies free in the matter of Poland. Again it was America, now a belligerent Allied Power, which spoke first. The famous Fourteen Points of President Wilson's message to Congress on 8 January 1918 included as point 13 the reconstruction of an independent Poland with access to the sea. This was confirmed as one of the aims of the War by a joint resolution of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain, France, and Italy, on 3 June 1918. Poland was declared an Allied belligerent nation, and General Haller's army in France, which had grown to considerable dimensions, received its distinct national standing. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Paderewski in America, its ranks, since America's entry into the War, had been swelled by over 20,000 Poles from the United States and Canada; it also included large contingents of former German and Austrian soldiers of Polish nationality, taken prisoners by the Allies on the French and Italian fronts. They now entered the Polish ranks as volunteers, many of them moved by the eloquence of the aged W. Mickiewicz, the son of Poland's greatest poet. The "Blue Army"—so called from its *bleu horizon* uniforms—ultimately amounted to six divisions, totalling about 50,000 men, of whom one-half came in 1919 from War prisoners' camps in Italy. The Polish forces were acknowledged by France as an independent Allied army on 28 September, and their supreme command was entrusted, on 4 October, to General Joseph Haller, who had arrived from the Murman. Before that date the soldiers of the "Blue Army" had had the privilege of taking part in the last and decisive stages of fighting on the Western front. In the spring of 1919 the army, after endless delays and difficulties, was at last sent to Poland, where it was to have a distinguished share in the early wars of the new Poland.

The existence of Haller's army certainly constituted a potent argument in favour of Polish claims on the conclusion of the War. There was a common thread uniting the bold initiative of Piłsudski and his legionaries at the beginning of the War with the rise of a strong Polish army on the Allied side towards its end. Both these, and all the other



numerous Polish military formations of war-time, sprang from an instinctive and perfectly just conviction that only active participation in the War would give Poland a place among the nations whose rights to freedom were considered by the peacemakers.

The successes achieved by the Polish cause in the councils of the Allies during the last year of the War were largely the fruit of the labours of the Polish National Committee in Paris and of its President, Roman Dmowski. It was the crown of his war-time efforts that the Committee was at last recognized by the Allies as an official representation of the Polish nation; his position as one of the delegates of Poland at the Peace Conference was the direct consequence of this, and was assuredly as well earned as was Paderewski's by his work in America.

Of the last stages of Austro-German rule over the Polish lands, the only event worth recording is the belated attempt of the Austrian Emperor Karl, made in his manifesto of 16 October 1918, to transform the Hapsburg Monarchy into a federation of self-governing nations. By that time, however, the slogan of "self-determination" had been launched by President Wilson; and the Austro-Polish Parliamentary deputies on 15 October declared themselves to be henceforward "subjects and citizens of the free and united Polish State". On 27 October, a Committee was formed at Cracow for the severance of the ties hitherto binding Galicia to Austria; and on 31 October all the emblems of Austrian power were removed, administration being taken over by purely Polish authorities. Military control was assumed by Polish troops, formed partly of Piłsudski's legionaries and partly of Austrian soldiers of Polish nationality. The entire transformation took place without bloodshed, making Cracow the happiest of Polish towns in that respect. At Lwów, hard fighting between Poles and Ukrainians for possession of the city began next day, and other parts of Poland were not to be spared either actual fighting or fierce political contests before the authority of the resurgent Polish State was established.

In Warsaw, indeed, the Regency Council as early as 7 October had proclaimed a united and independent Poland in a manifesto to the nation. The Council of State was dissolved, and the formation of a coalition government, as well as the election of a democratic Parliament, announced. Kucharzewski, then Prime Minister for the second time, was to form the coalition, but failed, owing to lack of support from the Left. Another cabinet, formed by Joseph Świerzyński and composed of National Democrats, remained in power only for a fort-

night; attempting to overthrow the Regency Council, it was itself dismissed and made room for a cabinet of officials. In the meantime, the Socialist Left had formed a government of its own at Lublin under the Austro-Polish Socialist leader, J. Daszyński; proclaiming a very radical social programme, it failed to secure sufficient support, especially among the peasant farmers. The Regency Council was too weak to suppress the Lublin government, and the country was threatened by chaos.

A common feature of all these governments formed in the first weeks of Poland's new existence was the reservation of the post of Minister of War for Joseph Piłsudski. Though still a prisoner in Magdeburg, his authority was unquestioned among all political groups. Through negotiations with the temporary revolutionary authorities then holding power in Germany, his release was effected, and he arrived in Warsaw on the very eve of the Armistice. The Regency Council at once entrusted the supreme military command to him, and three days later resigned altogether in his favour. Daszyński's Lublin government also recognized him as the supreme authority. Piłsudski appointed a cabinet, first under Daszyński, then under another Socialist, A. Moraczewski. He notified all the Powers that a free Polish State had come into existence (16 November), and a few days later (22 November) issued a decree, defining the new State as a Republic, assuming the title of "temporary Chief of State", and announcing the election of a Constituent Assembly.

The Regency Council, while still in power, had negotiated with the occupying powers concerning the withdrawal of their troops and administration. Austria had proved accommodating enough, but the Germans had been more stubborn and played for delay. Simultaneously with Piłsudski's arrival, however, the revolution, by that time in full course in Germany, also broke out among the German garrison in Poland's capital. Soldiers' Councils on the Russian model were formed. The German soldiers apparently had no other wish than to go home. Volunteers from all ranks of the population had no difficulty in disarming them. A Polish army, composed of remnants of all the military formations, was rapidly consolidating. The ranks of the *Polnische Wehrmacht* had in 1918 been swelled by the legionaries interned at Benjaminów and Szczypiorno, and the Regency Council had, on 12 October, formally assumed control over it. On the other hand, the men of Piłsudski's "Military Organization", under E. Śmigły-Rydz, one of his most trusted officers, had been busy all the time, training officers and men in secret. These two elements now furnished the

basis of the new armed force, whose numbers grew quickly. A General Staff and a Ministry of War were organized in the second half of October 1918.

From Warsaw, the movement spread to the provincial districts of former Russian Poland; and the whole occupation area was soon cleared of all German and Austrian soldiers and functionaries. While thus two of the three sectors of partitioned Poland regained their freedom, the deliverance of Prussian Poland proved a more difficult task. A Polish Committee existing at Poznań proclaimed itself on 10 November the "Supreme Council of the People"; and an executive committee of three convoked a democratically elected Provincial Assembly. But it was only in the very last days of the year 1918, 27 December, that an armed rising at Poznań, spreading all over Prussian Poland, at last drove the Germans out of the province, not without hard fighting. The Poznań rising coincided with the arrival of Paderewski, whose high personal qualities made the co-operation of all political forces in Poland possible. He was soon to become Prime Minister. With the collaboration between him and Piłsudski the constitutional history of a united new Polish State began.

## CHAPTER XX (*continued*)

### THE POLISH QUESTION DURING THE WORLD WAR

#### B. THE POLISH PROBLEM IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

FROM the suppression of the rising of 1863 to the outbreak of war in 1914, the Polish Question ceased to exist as an international problem. Although the relations between the partitioning powers were from time to time disturbed by serious crises, Poland was never an issue in their quarrels, as if all three powers were mindful of the obligation assumed in the treaty of 26 January 1797 "to abolish everything which might recall the remembrance of the existence of the Kingdom of Poland". Polish parties in the Reichstag, the Reichsrat and the Duma proved that there was a Polish question in Germany, in Austria, and in Russia; but "Poland" was not officially admitted to exist. It is even possible that war between the Central Powers and Russia, which was talked of for a generation before 1914, was delayed by the common realization that a war between them would offer the Poles an opportunity to make trouble and perhaps to recover their independence.

Be that as it may, the Great War had hardly begun before the Polish Question appeared on the political stage. On 3 August 1914, three days before Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia but two days after Germany had done so, Joseph Piłsudski issued a manifesto from Cracow declaring that "a people's government had been established in Warsaw", and on 6 August he invaded Russian Poland with 172 "legionaries". The Austro-Hungarian government permitted this gesture in the expectation that the population of Congress Poland would rise against Russia, and, a few days later, the commanders of the armies of the Central Powers issued high-sounding proclamations promising the Poles deliverance from the Muscovite yoke. This encouraged the Polish political leaders of Galicia to form a Supreme National Committee and propose the formation of Polish legions, which should operate in the Austro-Hungarian army under the control of the Committee. But since Russian Poland did not rise, Habsburg policy was cautious. The military authorities required the legions to take an oath of allegiance to Francis Joseph, while politically nothing was done. True, the Minister of Finance, Leon Biliński—

the only Pole in high office in any of the partitioning powers—prepared a proclamation, to be issued by Francis Joseph, promising that in the event of victory “a united Polish Kingdom” would be created and incorporated in the Habsburg monarchy on a parity with Austria and Hungary. This plan was accepted by Francis Joseph and by Count Berchtold, the Foreign Minister. It was, however, promptly vetoed by Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, who was unwilling to abandon the existing Dualism. As Germany also objected, the plan was perforce dropped.

Yet Germany had no plan of her own. Some thought that she must obtain additional Polish territory for military reasons, whereas the Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, believed that the inclusion of more Poles would weaken rather than strengthen Germany. His own solution—an independent Poland closely allied with Germany—was, naturally, not acceptable to Austria-Hungary.

Not only Russian Poland did not rise, but the Polish representatives in the Duma replied to Piłsudski on 8 August with a declaration of loyalty which made a great sensation throughout Russia and Europe. The Russian government thereupon issued a stirring manifesto signed by the Grand Duke Nicholas, the commander-in-chief, promising the Polish people a reunion of their land under the sceptre of the Emperor of Russia. “Under this sceptre, Poland will be born again, free in its religion, its language and its self-government.” Immense enthusiasm was generated by this pronunciamiento. In Warsaw the Russian troops were saluted as liberators, while sixty-eight members of the Realist and National Democrat parties telegraphed thanks to the Grand Duke and protested against the action of the Supreme National Committee in Cracow. The promise of reunion and “self-government” was renewed by the Russian military authorities after the capture of Lwów early in September. As the Russians continued to be victorious, their government consented to the creation of a Polish National Committee in Warsaw (November 1914), which declared against the Austrophile policy of Cracow and asserted that the victory of the Central Powers could result only in “a new partition of Poland”.

Nevertheless the Russian government moved as cautiously as its enemies. Bobrinsky, the military governor of occupied Galicia, stated untruthfully that Eastern Galicia, where the population was preponderantly non-Polish, had been an integral part of Russia from time immemorial, and proceeded to russify the administration. The manifesto of the Grand Duke was directed, by its very wording, primarily to the Austrian and Prussian Poles, and in December 1914

the governors of the Polish provinces were secretly informed that it did not apply to Russian Poland. Sazonov, the Foreign Minister, who sincerely desired a solution of the Polish problem, told the French ambassador, Paléologue, who regarded himself as a kind of spokesman for Poland, that it was "the most serious and most complex question of Russian internal policy" and that any solution must be "under the sceptre of the Romanovs".

A half-hearted attempt to do something was made in June 1915 with a commission of eight Russians and six Poles, under the presidency of the Russian premier Goremykin. Goremykin's statement that "self-government" depended on the reunion of the Polish lands reduced the discussions to futility, for the German armies entered Warsaw on 5 August, and until November 1918, Poland was occupied by the Central Powers. His subsequent declaration in the Duma that Poland might look forward to autonomy after the war probably aimed at continuing the deception of the National Democrats. Unfortunately for the prestige of Russia, her retreating armies systematically devastated the Polish countryside, so that the German Chancellor could sneer at the "freedom of peoples" for which the Entente powers claimed to be fighting. Polish sentiment now began to run against Russia.

During the following year, statesmen on both sides continued to deal gingerly with the Polish question. In the Allied camp, only Italy, which had joined it recently, was sufficiently detached in the matter to be able to give expression, by a vote of her Parliament late in 1915, to "the most ardent wishes" for the "reconstitution" of Poland "as a unity of a free and independent state". As for the Central Powers, in December 1915, the German Chancellor praised the military occupation, but said nothing about the future. In April 1916, he declared that the Central Powers had not intended to open the Polish Question, but "the fortune of war had raised it" and they would solve it—how, he did not say. In June 1916, the Hungarian Premier promised that "the wish of the Polish nation and its vital interests" would be taken into consideration "as far as possible".

In March 1916, the French ambassador in Petrograd was instructed to bring the Polish Question delicately to the attention of the Russian Foreign Minister. Sazonov, much annoyed, telegraphed to Paris that Russia rejected any plan to "place the future of Poland under the control and guarantee of the powers". At the beginning of June, however, he betook himself to general headquarters and proposed to Nicholas II the autonomy of Poland in local government, by means of a parliament of two houses and a viceroy appointed by the Tsar. With the aid of the general staff, who desired Polish popular support in the

forthcoming offensive, the minister carried his point. But before the manifesto of the Tsar could be issued, Sazonov was overthrown by the Premier, Stürmer, who bitterly opposed a scheme for which Russians in general had no enthusiasm.

The first real impetus for the restoration of Poland came from the Central Powers. It was perhaps natural that in 1916, the German general staff should turn to Poland as a possible source of new manpower. Accordingly the plan was conceived of an "independent" Polish state, which, out of gratitude for its creation, would fill the gaps in the German and Austro-Hungarian armies. On 5 November 1916, a manifesto of the German and Austrian Emperors declared that the Polish territories wrested from Russia would become "an autonomous state under the form of an hereditary and constitutional monarchy", with frontiers to be settled later, and a Polish army whose organization, instruction and direction would be undertaken by the Central Powers. This step proved a bad calculation. The Russian government protested, first in the Duma and later to its allies and to neutral governments, against so crass a violation of international law. The Tsar, deeply wounded, on Christmas Day, 1916, issued a ringing order of the day rejecting the proposals of peace made by the Central Powers on 12 December and reaffirming the will of Russia to victory.

The reaction among the Poles themselves was equally disastrous. Although the "activists" among the politicians of Galicia and Congress Poland were willing to co-operate with the occupying powers in the establishment of a Council of State and a Diet, there was certainly no enthusiasm among the people. For the Polish army in Russian Poland, less than two thousand men volunteered. The committee of Polish politicians residing abroad (Lausanne) in their manifesto of 11 November, roundly asserted that the programme of the Central Powers amounted to "a new sanction of the work of partition".

This contention received support from an unexpected source. In January 1915 the pianist I. J. Paderewski proceeded to the United States to unite the American Poles and to raise relief funds for his war-torn country. For the next three years he played in countless concerts as only he could play, devoting the entire proceeds to the cause of relief, and made innumerable addresses, in perfect English, setting forth the cause of Poland. The really important circumstance, however, was that he gained the ear of Colonel House, the intimate adviser of President Wilson. Thanks to this, Paderewski was able to see Wilson immediately after the Austro-German proclamation of November 1916, and to state the case for his country. Early in 1917,

House asked Paderewski for a memorandum on Poland, which was delivered in less than three days. Thus in his famous address to the Senate on 22 January 1917, President Wilson declared that: "No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property. I take it for granted, for instance", he continued, "if I may venture upon a single example, that statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be a united, independent and autonomous Poland." Statesmen were certainly not so agreed in either belligerent camp, but the daring assertion by the head of the greatest neutral power caused an immense sensation. Both the Polish Council of State in Warsaw, although a body hand-picked by the Central Powers, and a group of Poles in Paris telegraphed their high appreciation of their unexpected champion.

The governments of the partitioning powers were of course disagreeably impressed. Berlin suspected that Wilson was proposing to rob Germany of her Polish territories in the peace settlement. One of the last acts of the Tsarist government was to agree with the French (11 March 1917), that, in return for recognizing their claims to Alsace-Lorraine and the right to fix the eastern frontier, Russia received the right to determine her own western limits, that is, to include as much of Poland as she could reconquer. Fortunately, this bargain did not survive the revolution of March 1917.

One of the first international acts of the new liberal Russian government was to reverse the historic Polish policy of the old régime. On 29 March 1917, a manifesto to the Polish people declared that "the creation of an independent Polish state consisting of all the territory where the Polish people constitute a majority of the population" was "an assured guarantee of durable peace in the remodelled Europe of the future". The new Poland was invited to join with free Russia in a "free military union", and a commission presided over by Alexander Lednicki, a Pole, was appointed to liquidate Russo-Polish relations. The British, French and Italian governments expressed their satisfaction with this declaration.

As long as Tsarist Russia was active in the war, the Allied governments had perforce accepted her policy in respect of Poland. Even now they did not intend to commit themselves too deeply, for the situation created by the revolution was obviously fluid and uncertain. When the Emperor Charles, in the spring of 1917, attempted to



negotiate a separate peace between Austria-Hungary and the Entente powers, the British, French and Italian governments were apparently ready to disinterest themselves in Poland if Austria would surrender the Trentino to Italy and could persuade Germany to renounce Alsace-Lorraine to France. Once again fortune was kind to Poland, for Charles refused to surrender territory to Italy. In June 1917, the French government consented to the formation of an autonomous "Polish army" in France, with a Polish flag, under French command; though, upon protest by the German government, they declared that German prisoners of Polish nationality would not be forced to serve against their will.

It was the Poles themselves who finally gave a more decided turn to the policy of the Allies. In 1915, after the Russian retreat from Poland, the leader of the National Democrats in the Duma, Roman Dmowski, had left Russia, in November, for western Europe. At Lausanne he established with Marjan Seyda, a journalist from Prussian Poland and the brother of a member of the Reichstag, a Polish Press Agency, which began propaganda in the Entente countries and the United States. In March 1917, Dmowski's pamphlet, *Problems of Central and Eastern Europe*, argued for the restoration of a united and independent Poland which should include not only the territories possessed before the First Partition (1772), but East Prussia as well. He also advocated the separation of the Habsburg state into its component racial parts, the union of German Austria with Germany, and the destruction of the Prussian hegemony in Germany.

In the summer of 1917, Stanislas Grabski, a leading politician from Galicia, joined Dmowski at Lausanne. Consequently in August the latter could become president of a Polish National Committee, consisting of representatives of all three sections of the country. This was presently transferred to Paris, where it remained until the end of the war. Representatives were appointed in London, Paris and Rome, and Paderewski was recognized as its agent in the United States. It was in due course recognized by the Polish political groups in Russia, Galicia and Prussian Poland, by the "passivists" in the new "Kingdom", and by the Polish National Department in Chicago established by Paderewski.

In the autumn, when the disintegration of the Russian armies could no longer be ignored, France (20 September), Great Britain (15 October), Italy (30 October) and the United States (10 November), recognized the Committee as the "official Polish organization". This step testified to their interest, and to that extent it encouraged the

Poles of the "Kingdom" to resist all efforts by the Central Powers to solve the Polish question in their own interest. That such was the intention of the Central Powers was obvious and natural. Elsewhere it is related how they were in continual dispute with the puppet governments set up in Warsaw, first under the proclamation of November 1916, and later under the Council of Regency inaugurated in October 1917.

Equally significant was the inability of the Central Powers to agree upon the ultimate solution of the Polish question, in their own interest. There were in fact dissensions within both governments. The German Chancellor, Count Hertling, and the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Czernin, had agreed that Russian Poland was to be incorporated in the Habsburg dominions and, with Galicia, was to form a third unit within the Dual Monarchy of 1867. In return Germany was to receive a rectification of her frontier with Poland and other political, economic and military concessions. But the German military authorities did not like this "Austrian Solution", while the Hungarian Tisza objected to the incorporation of Poland except on terms unacceptable to Austria. Incidentally, Germany and Austria-Hungary were alike determined to obtain the Dombrowa coalfields.

This was the situation when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional government of Russia on 7 November 1917, and shortly afterwards sought peace with the Central Powers on the basis of no indemnities and no annexations. The German Chancellor found no difficulty in accepting the principle of self-determination for the peoples of Poland, Courland and Lithuania, but in the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk from 3 December, the conflicting views proved irreconcilable. The Russians demanded that the occupied territories should be evacuated, whereas the Central Powers insisted that the "autonomous" organizations existing in Poland and the other occupied regions must be recognized. In the end, the Russians were unable to compel evacuation. But when the Polish government and later the Council of Regency demanded, logically enough, that Poland should be represented in the negotiations, the Central Powers did not consent.

The Central Powers were also dealing with the Ukraine, where a non-Bolshevik government was for the moment in control. On 9 February 1918, they made a peace which, *inter alia*, ceded to the Ukraine the province of Chełm, historically part of Poland. The indignation of all the Poles was boundless, and their legions on the Rumanian front attempted to pass over to the Russians. From this

time the prestige of the Central Powers among the Poles rapidly withered away.

The German and Austro-Hungarian governments continued to negotiate for the disposition of Congress Poland, which was surrendered by Russia in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (3 March 1918), but up to November 1918 they had not reached an understanding. None of the plans proposed would have been satisfactory to Poland. For while Germany was at times ready to accept the "Austrian solution", she never contemplated ceding her Polish territories (Poznań and Pomorze) to the new state. From the end of 1917 the Poles understood that a "Polish solution" was possible only after an Allied victory.

Fortunately for Poland, the Allies had experienced a change of heart. The collapse of Russia and the Bolshevik peace with the Central Powers left Eastern Europe at the mercy of Germany; and the Allies were, in their own interests, constrained to set up Poland as a barrier to German expansion. On 8 January 1918, the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, declared: "We believe that an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe."

Three days later, the President of the United States proclaimed his Fourteen Points, of which the thirteenth was formulated thus: "An independent Polish state should be erected, which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant." If there were nuances in these declarations, there could be no doubt that Great Britain and the United States were formally committed to the cause of Polish unity and independence. The moral effect was tremendous, and the country was sustained in its resistance to the occupying powers. At the Conference of Oppressed Nationalities of Austria-Hungary held at Rome in April 1918, the Polish representatives declared that the solution of the Polish question did not depend upon the destruction of the Dual Monarchy alone, "The future of Poland", they declared, "depends entirely upon the result of the conflict with Germany, not only because territories essentially Polish are under its direct domination, territories the possession of which is for Poland the indispensable condition of its political and economic independence and which, among others, assure it a free access to the sea, but also because the principal aim of German policy is to prevent the unification of Poland and the creation of a strong Polish state which would stand in the way of Germany's dominating the whole of Eastern Europe." The Allied

and Associated governments formally accepted this view when, on 3 June 1918, they announced that "the creation of a united and independent Polish state with free access to the sea constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace, and of the rule of right in Europe".

To help to win the war the Poles did what they could. In September 1917, the Polish National Department of Chicago set up a military commission to recruit for the Polish army in France among recent Polish immigrants. About 20,000 men volunteered, and by June 1918, were ready to take their place on the Western front under the command of General Haller. These troops fought well up to the Armistice of 11 November 1918.

Not long before the Armistice, Dmowski, the president of the Polish National Committee, visited the United States and in several interviews with President Wilson presented the territorial claims of Poland, at first orally and then in a memorandum (8 October 1918). These were defined as the frontiers of 1772, plus Upper Silesia and East Prussia, in keeping with the views presented by Dmowski in his brochure of the previous year. Despite the threat to turn the Polish voters against him, Wilson did not commit himself. But on 1 November 1918, Great Britain and France having already done so, the United States recognized "the Polish army, under the supreme political authority of the Polish National Committee, as autonomous and co-belligerent".

At the beginning of the war the Polish Question hardly existed, and for two years both groups of belligerents handled it in restrained fashion. At the end of the war the solution desired by the Poles had become, in large measure, almost in the nature of things. This was made possible, of course, by the collapse first of the Romanov and later of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern empires. In a military way the Poles contributed very little to this result, but politically they played their cards well. They refused, on the one hand, to accept a Russian, German or Austrian solution and stood out for the Polish solution—union and independence. On the other hand, they were careful not to offend the partitioning, occupying or disinterested powers, taking always what was offered as a step in the right direction, and gradually creating organizations, both at home and abroad, which, at the appointed moment, might take action. Thus it came about that on 10 November 1918, when Joseph Piłsudski appeared in Warsaw, he was able to place himself at the head of a Polish army and a Polish state. On the eve of the Armistice, the Polish question was thus solved, in its broad outlines, by the Poles themselves.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE PEACE CONFERENCE, 1919

AS the Great War drew on, the empires which had partitioned Poland successively collapsed. The hope that Russia would unite all three sectors into an autonomous Kingdom vanished with the Tsardom and the Liberal régime. At the outset of 1918, the Bolsheviks abjured all claim to conquer the Polish nation, save by ideas. Early in November, the project for uniting Russian Poland with Galicia as a constituent unit of the Habsburg Empire became impossible, since Austria-Hungary dissolved. Finally the Armistice, without expressly naming Poland, frustrated the design of the Germans to form a puppet Polish monarchy of their own. It remained for the Allies to redress the four partitions of 1772—1815 by establishing that national Poland, independent and secure of access to the sea, which for some two years they had declared a righteous war-aim.

Outside Germany, indeed, the re-establishment of such a State was approved, nay even demanded, by the conscience of mankind. Mankind believed itself to be upon the march. A battered and tormented world thirsted for a new social order, and regarded with fresh loathing the crimes which had preceded the great convulsion. Morality was reinforced by expediency, whose demands ranged from a barrier for Central Europe against Bolshevism to an East European ally for France and the votes of American Poles for Wilson. Even before the Armistice, "Justice for Poland" had caused anxious debate on the details of its accomplishment. Late in the war, while in Germany and Austria the old régime survived, and in Russia its supporters still expected victory, a balanced judgment was easier than amid the post-war haste and strain. The dispassionate then felt that although the untried statesmen of outraged Poland might demand her ancient frontiers, to restore them after 150 years would conflict with that self-determination which, since 1772, had been consecrated by the revolutions of America and France. Thus on 31 October 1918, the Americans who were explaining President Wilson's Fourteen Points to the Supreme War Council, stated as the "chief problem" "whether Poland is to obtain territory west of the Vistula which would cut off the Germans of East Prussia from the Empire, or whether

Danzig can be made a free port and the Vistula internationalized". They declared that "on the east, Poland should receive no territory in which Lithuanians or Ukrainians predominate. If Posen and Silesia go to Poland, rigid protection must be afforded the minorities of Germans and Jews living there, as well as in other parts of the Polish State". The new Poland was to comprise the homes of an indisputably Polish population, but the President's word "indisputably", they contended, "may imply the taking of an impartial census before frontiers are marked". Thus prescription, convenience and self-determination must in some degree modify the historic frontier of the pre-partition age.

For some months after the Armistice, moreover, it was not easy to determine the authentic voice of Poland. A memorandum of the British Foreign Office recognized that on 1 December the Poles of "Galicia, Eastern Austria and Silesia" had united with their kinsmen under the Warsaw government of Piłsudski. But to many Poland was still embodied in "Haller's army", which had done good service on the Western front, and in the Polish National Committee in Paris. For months to come, Warsaw was largely beyond their ken. There, the Polish Regency, appointed by the Central Powers, had been steering towards a national government representing all three sectors. While Austria and Germany were tottering, the astonished Piłsudski, imprisoned at Magdeburg, read in a German newspaper that he had been appointed Polish Minister of War. Early in November, with Austria-Hungary in dissolution and Poles and Ukrainians fighting for Lemberg (Lwów), while at Warsaw the German garrison remained omnipotent, the Polish Republic was proclaimed. The Regents, however, substituted a temporary government of experts, and at Lublin a Socialist gentleman, Daszyński, headed a Workers' Administration. Meanwhile the Germans released Piłsudski, but were suddenly paralysed by revolution. In mid-November, while Piłsudski accepted from the Regents full powers to prepare for a national government, Dmowski, his ancient rival, returned from America to Paris, where he was received as the spokesman of an Associated Nation.

For some weeks, therefore, nascent Poland experienced a new partition. At Warsaw Piłsudski led the famished Poles in a tremendous struggle for order, territory and democratic freedom. In disposing of alternative governments and armies of occupation he had swift success. But in November 1918, he had "returned to a capital without a country", for what would be the Polish frontier no man could tell.

Warsaw, Cracow, Łódź, Poznań, Lwów, Wilno and the outflow of the Vistula—these were the vital members of an unmaimed Poland. The first three were now without question hers, but of the other four each seemed likely to involve a struggle against some mighty foe by a government which lacked soldiers, arms, food, money, factories, and reputation. While the Poles of Lwów were fighting for their city and their lives against the Ukrainians, Warsaw could do no more than beg Cracow to send them help. Piłsudski appealed to Marshal Foch for the dispatch of Haller's army, but the reply to this and other overtures was in effect that the Allies could be approached only through the Polish National Committee in Paris.

Against the Ukrainians, indeed, the Poles could perform miracles of enthusiasm, valour and organization. Their repute with the Allies, however, must suffer from the fact that Piłsudski, an obscure amateur general, of whom Dmowski, the best-known Polish statesman, disapproved, was now virtually dictator. To the Americans and British, at least, Poland was a little-known region whose people rather invited sympathy than commanded confidence. General Smuts voiced the widespread conviction that she was and would always be "an historic failure". Valour in the field, literary and artistic merit, noble ideals—these could hardly outweigh her ancient reputation for crazy government, party strife and ill-calculated rebellion. In 1918 her capacity to produce the great constructive achievements of the ensuing twenty years could not be divined. Piłsudski, if known at all, seemed to be a Socialist agitator who had spread sedition and robbed a mail-train, a guerrilla leader who had fought for the Central Powers, an ex-prisoner ignorant of the last two campaigns and of the western situation. Twenty years later, Mr Lloyd George could believe that he "devoted the whole of his mind and character to a policy of territorial expansion by force". In 1918, none of the world-arbiters could suppose that this shabby Legionary was at least his own equal in will-power, insight and power of inspiration.

To the Allies, however, Poland spoke with a single voice. Dmowski, like Piłsudski, was too sincerely patriotic to jeopardize his country by open disunion between her spokesmen. He pressed for the dispatch of Haller's army by way of Danzig, and eventually secured it by way of Germany. Thus reinforced, the Poles could master all Galicia and prove to the Allies that they were no helpless dependants on the older states. Meanwhile it was for the Peace Conference to do them justice.

Fully two months separated the Armistice from the inauguration

of the Conference on 12 January 1919. The delay has been severely condemned, especially for its influence upon the Senate of the United States. A simpler preliminary treaty, it is urged, would have commended itself to Americans eager for peace and reconstruction and not as yet shocked by the claims of a party President to commit his country to the selfish broils of Europe. To Poland, on the other hand, *every day's delay brought gain*. Under Piłsudski chaos began to yield to order, while the best-known of living Poles, the genial patriot Paderewski, could prepare to represent his country at Paris as Premier and Foreign Minister in one. When the right of a state to exist is challenged, the best reply is that it is already in vigorous life. Piłsudski's directness, industry and fertility were in some respects aided by the times. Who but he could end the chaos? Widespread unemployment helped recruiting. Every week gave Poland a larger army and a wider frontier, while elections on a most democratic franchise were to be held on 26 January. Meanwhile Bolshevism was infecting great regions outside Russia, and Poland might constitute the necessary bulwark of Central Europe.

The choice of Paris as the scene of the conference for peace made it easier to graft the new authority of the Allies upon their cherished war directorate. In the nature of things those who had won the war would make the peace, since they alone could uphold it. Five Great Powers had some 12,000,000 soldiers under arms. These Five, the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan, might and did concede representation to the smaller states and invite advice on special points from neutrals, but the final decision lay with themselves. Until the way was clear for the American President and the British Premier to settle down in Paris, the essence of the Conference, therefore, was a Council of Ten—two representatives from each of the leading states. This body naturally replaced the Supreme Council which had ruled during the closing stages of the war. Its leading members were welded by intercourse and discussion during the autumn and winter months. But, until 14 March, the Ten must explore the business and construct machinery rather than arrive at final decisions. Those could come only from premiers themselves in conclave.

Between 12 January and 14 March, indeed, work of great moment was accomplished, and by this no state profited more than Poland. Untried, lacking in unity, whether geographical, social or political, placed between two menacing Great Powers, with all friendly Great Powers far away, she was thought to be incapable of adequate self-



defence. The creation of a League of Nations, whose members would give mutual guarantees against aggression, therefore seemed essential to her re-establishment. Such a League, projected for several years, was shaped by a commission which the Conference established on 25 January, and on 28 April its covenant as drafted was approved. The League, in the opinion of its chief sponsor, President Wilson, would be strong enough not merely to maintain state frontiers but to adjust them in conformity with changes in constituent populations. Had its future seemed dubious, different provisions must have been made for Poland. As the Conference progressed, however, difficulties were more and more frequently abandoned to the future and to the League.

Again, on 8 February a Supreme Economic Council was created, to advise the Conference upon the economic measures necessary while political reconstruction went on. This extended to the satisfaction of other Polish needs the remedial action which the United States had already taken with regard to food, for the former Russian and Austrian sectors entered upon the winter in the grip of famine. Hoover Streets in Polish provincial towns commemorate the relief work of 1919 by the later American President. A Commission on Transport dealt with another vital necessity of war-ridden states. M. Tardieu, who represented France on twelve commissions of high importance, reckoned the total of such bodies as 58 and their meetings as 1646, besides 26 local investigations. Such was the volume of the work of reconstruction, and such the variety of the demands upon those who must frame a settlement for Poland. "Appalling dispersal of energy" has been described as the keynote of the Conference.

While the Ukrainian war was still undecided, and far more colossal and confused struggles between Whites and Reds raged in Russia, the Peace Conference proper began. Although the world regarded it as in some sense a parliament of mankind, it was legally, and for the most part substantially, a conference of allied and associated powers to make treaties of peace with the enemies to whom they had granted an armistice. Of these powers, France, Belgium, Britain, Serbia, Italy, Portugal and Japan were interconnected by alliances. Rumania and Russia, both formerly allied with the West, had been forced to make separate treaties of peace. Rumania none the less naturally attended, but no Russian representation proved feasible. Russian Bolshevism, indeed, was succeeding German Imperialism as the public enemy.

The United States and eleven other American republics, with

China, Siam, Greece, the Hedjaz and Liberia, were associated though not allied with the first group. The nascent States of Czechoslovakia and Poland were included in the Conference, and the four British Dominions and India received separate representation. The chief enemy State, of course, was Germany, while Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey were to be the subjects of separate treaties. Albania, Luxemburg and Montenegro must await the decisions of a body in which they, like the enemy States, had no direct representation.

As will presently be traced in detail, the form, the composition and the procedure of the assemblage were all liable to change. The surrounding world, moreover, was in such a state of flux that no conference of men could remain unaffected by its violent changes. Fundamentally, however, the Paris Conference embodied an effort by the victorious democracies both to redraw the frontiers between the belligerents and to establish a better social order among states. Having learned by their own enquiries and discussions what ought to be done, they proposed to communicate their plans to the enemy, and, in the light of his reply, to draft what would be at once a treaty of peace and an ultimatum.

The Polish question had in no sense caused the war, but every campaign had increased its prominence. In his statement of war aims on 5 January 1918, Lloyd George declared that an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements which desired to form part of it, was an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe. With this, if it could be realized in practice, all the Allies agreed, but the Germans loathed the idea of Polish restoration. Poles, they sincerely believed, were by nature disorderly and barren, and the retrocession to them of German conquests would be a crime against the ascent of man. The configuration of Europe, they held, in no way hinted at the necessity of a separate state between themselves and Russia. Dispassionate American judgment was impressed by the fact that Polish, Russian and Ukrainian writers all asserted a self-evident natural right to the same vast region. No theory of natural frontiers, indeed, could much assist those who had to delimit the Polish national home. By interposing no great physical obstacle except the Pripet Marshes to the movement of several nations, nature had connived both at the German eastward urge and at the march of the Poles both north and east. Two racial expansive tendencies thus clashed most bitterly on and near the lower Vistula, and now presented the Conference with perhaps the most formidable of all its problems.

The hereditary antipathy between Poles and Germans was perhaps the chief among many ancient feuds which affected the problem of re-born Poland. That with Russia was for the moment in abeyance, but, like that with Lithuania, it must recur. In Posen, Poles and Germans had come to blows. Before that struggle ended, another, between Poles and Czechs in Teschen, had arisen. Although this for a time subsided, it mocked those theorists of the British Foreign Office who had dreamed of a Czecho-Polish State. In eastern Galicia open war continued. Having regard to the national feelings with regard to Danzig and still more to Upper Silesia, it was possible that no German government would venture to purchase peace by renouncing both or either. Further scrutiny of the racial distribution within the ancient Polish frontiers showed that in several regions the truth was almost beyond discovery, and that certainly no clear-cut local division could be attained. On the other hand, elections to the Warsaw Diet had just been held in the Russian sector and in western Galicia without disturbance, and a united Polish delegation to the Conference had been formed. To Poland was granted representation on the Commission for Reparations. Germany at the same time seemed to be turning against her revolutionary extremists. In these circumstances Dmowski, on 29 January 1919, presented to the Council of Ten his country's claims.

The oration, delivered on the eve of the recognition of re-born Poland by the United States, was for more than one reason arresting. The established practice was for speakers to address the Council either in French or English for ten minutes, and to resume when the interpreter had translated their words into the other tongue. Dmowski, however, in welcoming a League of Nations, had said in French that his country lay in that part of Europe in which the greatest danger threatened peace. The English version made him say that his country formed the greatest danger to peace. Now, therefore, he became his own translator, and spoke in alternate languages for some five hours, reaching the nineteenth century at 4 p.m. His improvised address aimed specially at winning the sympathy of Wilson. He first excused the Socialist government in Warsaw as an example of protective colouring by weak Poland amid the Russian, German and Hungarian revolutions. In Poznań, he unanswerably contended, for the Poles to obey the Council and cease fighting, while the Germans went on, would be suicide. The Council must send a commission to dictate and to localize a truce. Invited to explain the Polish claims to territory, he made great play with a German map showing the racial

conquests on which their Colonizing Commission had spent \$300,000,000 between 1885 and 1914. Was the Conference to support such expropriation of the Polish natives? The Baltic question, he frankly declared, could not be settled without injury to one or the other side. Either East Prussia, an island of nearly 2,000,000 Germans, must be cut off from the fatherland, or a like hurt must be inflicted on the West Prussian Poles, and in that case all Poland, a people of 25,000,000 souls, would be dominated by the Germans.

Since the most urgent business was to make peace with Germany, the Council merely appointed a Commission to consider the Polish frontiers, especially the western. Clemenceau, who presided, privately condemned only Dmowski's claim to Teschen (Cieszyn). His attitude was of special importance, since in the Commission France predominated. Jules Cambon, formerly ambassador in Berlin, presided, with General Lerond, a geographical specialist, as Vice-president. Baron Degrand, the Foreign Office expert on Poland, Sir William Tyrrell, the Marquis della Torretta, and the Harvard professor, R. H. Lord, a master of Partition history, represented the four Great Powers.

A month after Dmowski had introduced the Polish claims, he detailed those for a western frontier in a formal note to Cambon (28 February 1919). In the interval the Armistice had been renewed with the Germany of President Ebert, a saddler. The League of Nations was taking shape, and the notion of a preliminary peace with Germany was gaining ground. The Poles, through Dmowski, now maintained that Poland should be re-established with the frontiers violated in 1772, but modified by the subsequent expansion or contraction of the Polish race, and by the economic and strategic needs of a position between Germany and Russia.

Reviewing the provinces ravished from her by the Austrians and Germans, he argued that, despite the German agitation among the Ruthenes, Galicia, with her population of more than 8,000,000 and her mineral wealth, should return to Poland undivided. Poland should also receive a small wedge of Hungary lying between Galicia and Silesia, and likewise, on grounds of race and situation, the greater part of Teschen in Austrian Silesia. Since the census figures for Czechish Teschen had been manifestly fraudulent, a local commission should fix the boundary line.

In Upper Silesia, with its great wealth in coal, he claimed that nationality and geography alike dictated the cession by Prussia of districts inhabited by an immense majority of Poles. Here a new

boundary line was specified. He declared that in Poznań, the cradle of the Polish State and now its best developed section, German statistics claimed thirty-eight per cent of the 2,100,000 inhabitants against a true figure of not more than twenty per cent. The whole should be regained by Poland. West Prussia, with 1,703,000 people, had more than the thirty-five per cent of Poles which official statistics admitted. If the province were returned to Poland, the flight of officials and soldiers and the relief from terror and germanization would result in a substantial Polish majority. Two of its most German districts might be in great part exchanged for two in eastern Pomerania. Of East Prussia, Königsberg and much else was completely germanized. If Poland were to be anything but a German dependency, however, it was essential that this province should not be territorially joined with Germany. Besides West Prussia, Poland should therefore regain Warmia (where in fact Catholicism predominated) and the southern belt of East Prussia, where the school statistics showed seventy-one per cent of Poles, while Polish national consciousness was growing. The strip along the lower Niemen with a Lithuanian population should be given to Lithuania and that state linked with Poland, while the remainder of East Prussia, with 1,070,000 people, became an independent republic protected by the League of Nations.

Dmowski's memorandum mentioned Danzig as having remained Polish until 1793, although the remainder of West Prussia was seized in 1772. Religious differences in Galicia, Silesia and East Prussia, although they were of high political significance, were passed over in silence.

The Polish claims relating to the eastern frontier were handed in on 3 March 1919. After describing the polonization and ancient loyalty of Lithuania, Dmowski recorded the success of Russia in inflaming against the Poles those who spoke Lithuanian and Russian. In Kiev, Mogilev and Vitebsk, and in eastern Podolia, Volhynia and Mińsk, Polish influence, he declared, had given place not to Russian but to that of anarchy. Those regions, therefore, Poland renounced. In Lithuania, on the other hand, the national movement, though young, had made great progress. The Polish government therefore held that the Lithuanian-speaking districts of Russian Poland and East Prussia, including the lower Niemen, should form a separate country within the Polish State.

The eastern frontier claimed by Poland would thus include in the north a Lithuanian-speaking region with from fifteen to twenty-five

per cent whose language was Polish, and, south of this, the Wilno region with its Polish majority. Next came the thinly *strewn fenmen* of Polesia, speaking Polish, White Russian or Ruthene, and finally Volhynia and a fragment of western Podolia, where, amid a Ruthene majority, a strong Polish minority was the only source of intellectual and economic strength.

Confessional differences, including those which were emphasized by the presence of a vast number of Jews, were again, as in the west, ignored. In his note to President Wilson, indeed, on 8 October 1918, Dmowski had stated that the progressive Jews of the eastern provinces stood second only to the Poles as an economic and intellectual force. The topic was the more important that many Jews apparently preferred the Germans to the Poles, and that Western opinion had been shocked by reports of anti-Jewish riots and massacres in Poland. These were denied by the Poles, whose veracity therefore incurred suspicion. Calculated falsehood also branded them as pro-German, moving the Diet to a unanimous repudiation.

Meanwhile, in the critical month of March, the cause of Poland advanced towards a settlement. The Conference was now working in an atmosphere of increasing strain and tension. Only one-fifth of the energy of its leaders, it was calculated, could be spent on actually making peace. While with the swift demobilization of the Anglo-Saxon armies the omnipotence of the Allies was placed in peril, all Central Europe lacked food and clothing. Food-hoarding, indeed, became the practice not only of families, but of towns and even of states. Disorder in half-starved countries grew more threatening, and society as a whole clamoured for reconstruction. It was necessary to provide for the German food-supply; a Communist revolution broke out in Hungary; and Italy threatened to quit the Conference rather than renounce Fiume. Poland, meanwhile, though wont to obey the Supreme War Council, definitely refused its behest to call a truce with her Ukrainian opponents. In these circumstances the plan for a preliminary peace followed by a well-thought-out settlement of Europe gave place to that of an immediate and final peace with Germany, of which the Covenant of the League of Nations should form part. This was to be followed as soon as events might allow by new arrangements further east.

The Polish refusal of a truce, which could not fail to offend some members of the Council, if not the whole, was made after the Ukrainian forces had become palpably inferior to the swelling hosts of Poland. At Dmowski's request, Paderewski left it to him to

answer Botha, who demanded that, without spilling more blood, the Poles should place eastern Galicia in the Council's hands. Dmowski replied that, in holding the region that separated Bolshevik Russia from Bolshevik Hungary, Poland was fighting both for her own life and for that of all Central Europe. She would grant a truce only if she occupied the whole province with the oilfields and if the Allies undertook to control the Ukrainians. Failing a guarantee against Bolshevik invasion, Dmowski stood firm against any temporary division of eastern Galicia, and scorned a private threat that, if Poland were obdurate, the Allies might reduce her gains from Germany.

Polish territorial claims, however, were in greater danger from the new form that the Council was about to take. Early in March, Lloyd George returned to Paris, where, at the earnest request of his colleagues, he remained with little intermission until the end of June, when peace with Germany was signed.

The British Premier brought to the Conference an authority which only Clemenceau and the President of the United States could rival. Wilson, moreover, owed his re-election by a narrow majority in 1916 to his success in keeping the United States neutral, while signs were not wanting that his autocratic methods were alienating opinion at home. On the other hand Lloyd George, the hero of the war, came fresh from a general election which was almost a plebiscite in favour of himself. A supple and engaging negotiator, he was accounted incomparable in his power of divining the wishes of his interlocutors without revealing the workings of his own mind. With his arrival, the British Foreign Office at once lost its authority, and soon the Council of Ten found itself superseded.

That Lloyd George should speak for the British Empire, in what soon became an omnipotent trio of Clemenceau, Wilson and himself, was tantamount to a grave reverse for Poland. Public and private considerations alike made him sincerely and implacably her foe. The nonconformist hating Rome, the socialist misguided by a hostile "expert", the politician dreading British votes against costly altruism in far-off lands—in none of these need we seek the prime motive of the new Catherine or Alexander who now dismembered nascent Poland. A conscientious statesman, mindful of British interests, could believe with Mr Fisher that a big Poland was a weak Poland or that their novel liberty had intoxicated the Polish spokesmen. He might question both the expediency and the justice of redressing historic wrongs by partitioning Germany, and creating an eastern Alsace-Lorraine. The Allies, he might well contend, had not poured

out their blood and treasure to create a new focus of discontent in Europe which might or must give rise to future wars. Since Germany could never compensate all those whom she had injured, those who had overcome her were best entitled to what spoils there were. France, he might sincerely believe, deceived both by her invincible distrust of Germany and by undue confidence in the friendship of smaller nations, wished to violate that sentiment of nationality which had inspired herself through half a century of suffering and, for twice as long, the Poles.

The fluctuating conflict which, as the following chapter shows, Poland had inherited in east Galicia was in essence defensive—a war to safeguard the Polish minority and to rescue the Western Ukraine from Bolshevism. It could plausibly be denounced however, as a defiant aggression against Ukrainian nationality. Was it meet to endow such a Poland with so many German towns and villages that Germany might refuse to sign the treaty?

Before 25 March, when, since Japan avoided intermeddling in Europe, the spokesmen of the other four victorious Great Powers formed the effective Conference, the Poles experienced more than one grave rebuff. In February, two representatives of each of the "Big Four" had visited Poland. They reported to a Committee of Five under Cambon, which included a Japanese. On 12 March, the Five unanimously recommended the Supreme Council of Ten to concede the greater part of what Dmowski had claimed. Danzig and the railway thence to Warsaw by way of Mława they would assign to Poland, whose "economic necessity", they held, should over-ride the wishes of a predominantly German population. In that region and in Upper Silesia, they awarded her the districts with a Polish majority, except for Protestant Allenstein, where a plebiscite should be held, and Teschen, which, for economic reasons, should fall to Czechoslovakia.

In the Council of Ten, however, a sharp division of opinion revealed itself. The French members could not forget that only a twelvemonth had passed since half a million citizens had fled from Paris at the outset of a fifth campaign. Believing that German ambition was inveterate, they wished Germany to be as small and weak as possible, and looked on Poland as a future ally against her. Wilson, whose reverence for nationality and trust in the League of Nations surpassed those of the French, favoured the Polish claims. Lloyd George, however, seeing Germany prostrate and France omnipotent, declined to make this temporary situation the basis of a new and suspect power. He declared himself "strongly averse to transferring



more Germans from German rule to the rule of some other nation than can possibly be helped". To surround Germany with small and untried states, each "containing large masses of Germans clamouring for reunion", would invite future war. To "place 2,100,000 Germans", he said, "under the control of a people which is of a different religion and which has never proved its capacity for stable self-government throughout its history must . . . lead sooner or later to a new war in the East of Europe." Poland, like other new or expanded states, seemed more imperialistic than the vanquished empires.

Three days before, the Polish Committee had declined to revise its proposals. Now, however, leadership in the Conference lay with three statesmen, who conversed endlessly with an interpreter as their only witness. All drew their power from democracy, but none was a Catholic or a Slav and none had ever visited Eastern Europe. Such was the tribunal which refused to give France its strategic necessity, the Rhine, which sent Haller's army through Germany to Poland, which drew the eastern German frontier and which created the Free State of Danzig.

Of all questions before the Conference none was more difficult than that of Danzig. The history, the nationality and the economic significance of the city were clear, but the conclusion to be drawn from them had been and still remained in hot dispute. For many centuries Danzig had been a Polish city mainly inhabited by Germans, but her preference of German nationality to mercantile profit was certainly new. Always highly autonomous, she had often almost monopolized Poland's foreign trade. Poland, in great measure, may be compendiously described as the valley of the Vistula, and Danzig commands the outlet of that river to the open sea. On the coast, thanks to the expansion of the German race, people indisputably Polish now inhabited only a short section comprising the western shore of the Gulf of Danzig and a morsel of eastern Pomerania. There, indeed, refuting alike the experts of 1919 and later German critics, Polish enterprise has created the admirable port of Gdynia. Within and without the Conference, however, such an achievement was undreamed of. Then and afterwards, it seemed that the claims of Polish nationality, of Polish economic necessity and of Polish independence alike could be satisfied only if Danzig were severed from the German Reich. As a British expert aptly wrote, "Poland may be able to live with German fingers on either side of her windpipe. She cannot live with a German finger in her throat". Compared with the life of a state containing some twenty million Poles, slight inconvenience

to a tenth their number of East Prussians was a trifle. Most German traffic with East Prussia went by sea, and in fact the relative importance of Danzig to other German harbours had declined.

Partial redress to Poland for the Partitions was therefore dictated by most of those Allied principles which applied to Danzig. Besides ideal justice to Poland, however, the Conference was bound to consider as a whole the terms which Germany must accept as the price of peace. These included the cession of Alsace-Lorraine, of small districts menacing Belgium and of such parts of Slesvig as might wish to return to Denmark. German hopes of union with Austria must be disappointed, for so long at least as France or Italy might regard this as dangerous. Poznanian was indubitably Polish, and important areas in Silesia now formed the home of Polish-speaking people. Bohemia and Moravia had contained many Germans, and these, if they remained in their homes, would become subjects of Czechoslovakia. Enemy feeling was too strong to permit the immediate entry of Germany into the League of Nations. At the same time she stood to lose her fleet, her army, her colonial empire and, for a time at least, her territory of the Saar, while for perhaps half a generation she would be condemned to a measure of disarmament and military occupation. In this doleful plight she must toil to discharge an uncalculated but gigantic burden of reparations.

As the penalty for having caused the world-war, and as a reply to the terms of Brest-Litovsk and of Bucharest, these terms might be defended. They point, none the less, to a weakness of democracy, whose statesmen dared not ignore such popular demands as "hang the Kaiser" and "make Germany pay". But they caused some misgiving with regard to both their expediency and their justice. The demand that Haller's army should be sent home by way of Danzig, which it might seize, had so inflamed the Germans that they threatened to end the Armistice. The Polish Committee, however, having heard Paderewski, upheld its unanimous report. Had Poland regained Danzig, the most hostile Germans would doubtless have left the city and the resentment of those who remained might have been drowned in prosperity. Their great-grandfathers, indeed, had been conspicuous in resisting transference to Prussia, after Frederick the Great had died with that purpose unachieved. In May 1919, however, Lloyd George had his way. Danzig with its district was to form a Free City of some 360,000 people, whose frontiers an Englishman and an American traced at a single sitting. The Marienwerder district, on the right bank of the undivided Vistula, was to vote on its own future.

East Prussia and a small German republic steered partly by Poland and partly by a League Commissioner would thus contract into a corridor the Baltic province of the Polish State. It remained for Poland, which sadly accepted the verdict, to conclude a treaty with the Danzig Senate, and then, if possible, to collaborate with those citizens who remained in the city and with those who would immigrate from Germany.

After three weeks' consideration, the Germans replied to the Conference plan with a mass of Observations (29 May 1919). Their first impression had been that the ruin of their state had been demanded. They now argued that to cede "the purely German Hanseatic town of Danzig" would be "national oppression", contravening Wilson's assurances, which they declared to be the basis of the Armistice. They offered to provide Poland with free ports at Danzig, Königsberg and Memel, and with access to them by the Vistula and the railways, all under international guarantees. To this the Allies rejoined that they had been fighting to right the wrong of the Partitions, that Germany had accepted the principle of retrocession of districts inhabited by an indisputably Polish population, and that their proposals had strictly followed what historic justice and nationality prescribed.

In criticizing the terms for Poznan and West Prussia, the Germans complained that these were governed not by nationality but by strategic needs for an invasion of Germany. In the regions designated for Poland they claimed to be superior in numbers and far superior in economic, social and cultural importance. The bridge connecting herself with East Prussia, Germany could not renounce.

These Observations drew the reply that East Prussia had not been included in Germany until 1866, while the Allies, to avoid even the appearance of injustice, had nowhere applied the strict law of historic retribution. Isolated German areas, indeed, fell to Poland, but without some sacrifice the frontier could not be drawn. Such action as that of the German Colonizing Commission should give no permanent title. This body, said a French Commissioner, had carried tyranny so far as to expel Poles dwelling in old omnibuses for installing stoves. Its efforts had created much of the racial mosaic which had now to be divided. To avoid any suspicion of injustice, none the less, some details of the ethnographical division had been revised.

With regard to Upper Silesia, which they valued far above Danzig, the Germans hotly denounced the alienation of a great part of a predominantly German province, and one indispensable to Germany.

Poland, they said, had had no connection with it since 1163. Its language was only a Polish dialect, and not a sign of nationality. The Allies had learned that the influential clergy were strongly pro-German, that a score of German industrialists dominated the province and that many Poles would fear to vote for freedom. Silesia, the Germans claimed, owed everything to Germany, and was far better off than was adjoining Poland. Peace and reparations alike depended upon its retention.

Thus encouraged, Lloyd George held an impromptu cabinet meeting of the British Empire Delegation. This determined, on 2 June, that the British fleet and army should not support the transfer to Poland of districts predominantly German, save for the strongest reasons, and that in doubtful cases a plebiscite should be demanded.

The debate within the Conference, which followed immediately, was long and stern, though the triumvirs always remained on friendly terms. Much sympathy was felt for Paderewski, in whom both Europe and America beheld selfless patriotism incarnate. He declared that if the Silesian cessions which Poland awaited were revoked he must resign. But neither Wilson, who would have preferred a wider Polish Silesia, nor Clemenceau, who held that no contraction would avert future trouble, could overcome Lloyd George, and the date of the Silesian plebiscite alone remained in doubt.

On 16 June, having drawn up a plan for the voting, the Allies replied to the German Observations. They announced that, although in the district to be ceded the majority was indisputably Polish, they had decided to hold a plebiscite in lieu of immediate transference to Poland. The restoration of the Polish State, they said, was a great historical act which must break many ties. But they were providing for the protection of the transferred Germans, as well as of all other minorities, religious, racial or linguistic. Should the plebiscite result in transfer, moreover, Silesian coal would be available to Germany for fifteen years on the same terms as to the Poles, and German rights to property would be safeguarded.

While this correspondence was proceeding, the Minorities Treaty, to which the Allies referred on 16 June, had been in preparation. It arose from that distrust of Poland's strength, capacity and goodwill which was consistently expressed by Lloyd George. Here that regard for the Jews which, according to some Poles, dominated his outlook found full expression. For generations, too, Germany had stretched between Western Europe and historic Poland and such

slight knowledge of the Poles as penetrated to the West was strongly tinged by the German creed that an independent Poland must always be a political absurdity. Polish talent, indeed, gave no sure warrant for moderation and equity, and the first Polish Diet seemed to be quarrelsome and unenlightened. Great masses of their fellow-citizens would certainly hate the Poles—the Germans contemptuous, the Jews apprehensive, the Ruthenes and perhaps the Russians resentful. The League of Nations, itself untried, might perhaps be able to protect the new Poland from foreign foes. Polish mismanagement, however, might render Poland Bolshevist. It was not unreasonable to make its protection conditional on a sufficient guarantee of moderation towards races which the new commonwealth would incorporate against their will.

To impose such guarantees, none the less, was undoubtedly to demand a limitation on sovereignty such as is naturally resented by a sovereign state. To Poland it was the less palatable because in the days of her greatness she had been conspicuous for tolerance, and because no similar protection was offered to Poles who remained in Germany—a state whose aggressive germanization had known no bounds. Restraints on sovereignty, however, were to be accepted not only by other new states, such as Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but also, for territories transferred under mandate, by the Great Powers themselves. They were secured, moreover, both by the Four and by the League, with all its machinery of Council, Assembly and Permanent Court of International Justice.

The system of Minority Treaties was first devised to solve the problems raised in drafting the German treaty by the case of Poland. About the middle of May, Poland, still technically a new state to be created by the treaties of peace, had received the proposals of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. She was to pledge herself to conclude with them treaties embodying such provisions as they should deem necessary for freedom of transit and equitable treatment of commerce and "to protect the interests of the inhabitants of Poland who differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion". In June, the draft provisions were discussed with Paderewski. The Polish protests only faintly foreshadowed those which were yet to come from the Balkan States. Some modifications resulted, and the final draft of the treaty, to be signed simultaneously with the German treaty by Poland, was accompanied by an elaborate letter from Clemenceau. This detailed the motives of the Allies and

congratulated Poland upon her restoration. At the moment that she solemnly declared before the world "her determination to maintain the principles of justice, liberty and toleration which were the guiding spirit of the ancient Kingdom of Poland", she was to receive "in its most explicit and binding form the confirmation of her restoration to the family of independent nations".

Unfortunately for the future of the treaty, it was difficult to reconcile the Allies' professions of belief that the voice of Poland would add to the wisdom of their common deliberations in the cause of peace and harmony with their demand for guarantees, in the most permanent and solemn form, for certain essential rights of the inhabitants. Although, as they stated, the Polish Government had declared its firm intention of giving full citizen rights to its minorities, religious, linguistic or racial, these were to be specifically secured by treaty. "Special protection", the Powers were convinced, "is necessary for the Jews in Poland", though their stipulations constituted no recognition of a Jewish political community.

The historical precedents on which the Powers rested their duty to maintain the "established tradition" of requiring a special convention were those of Serbia and religious liberty in 1878, of the Dutch towards the Belgians in 1814, and of Greece in 1832 towards Thessaly and the Mohammedans. The arguments that they were creating Poland, endowing her with their conquests, and supplying the League of Nations with strength to protect her, were perhaps more convincing, while the prospect that Czechoslovakia and the Balkan States would receive like treatment in some degree atoned for the slur. But Poland, with her memories of the sixteenth century, her more than twenty million population, her now victorious army, and her dreams of heading a great federation, could not escape a sense of humiliation. In April, by the boldest strategy, she had driven the Bolsheviks from Wilno. Her Galician advance, in defiance of the Allies' bidding, had brought her victory without sacrifice. Was such a Power to be treated as a secondary state?

Poland gave, none the less, elaborate securities for good behaviour. Seven of the early clauses of the Minorities Treaty contained fundamental laws, never to be altered by the Poles. Complete protection of life and liberty, and the right to such public and private worship as was consistent with public order and morals, were declared the right of every inhabitant of the Republic. At the same time citizenship could not be denied by the new state to large classes of people. Previous residents in her territory, whether as German, Austrian,

Hungarian or Russian subjects, were entitled to claim Polish nationality or to adopt another within a year, retaining their immovable property and carrying their movables with them. Non-resident natives being children of such persons received Polish nationality unless they abandoned it within two years. All natives of Poland who were not born nationals of another state became Polish. Before the law, all Polish nationals were to be equal, and their religious belief must cause them no prejudice in public or professional employment. Even in the press or at public meetings they might use any language. Polish nationals of non-Polish speech must be allowed its use before the courts, and minorities had the same right as the Polish majority to establish charitable, educational and religious institutions with their own language and religion.

Besides these fundamental laws, Poland promised that any considerable non-Polish local mass should be taught in its own language, though Polish might be made a compulsory subject, and that it should receive a fair share of any educational or social subsidies given by the state. Local Jewish educational committees were to manage the Jewish schools. Except to fulfil the requirements of defence and maintenance of order, Jews must not be compelled to violate their Sabbath, even in order to attend a law-court. Poland declared her intention not to hold registration or elections on Saturdays. She agreed that the stipulations regarding minorities were of international concern and should be guaranteed by the League of Nations. Should a majority of its Council modify them, the Five Powers agreed to assent to such modification. Any member of the Council might move that body to consider an infraction if made or threatened, and a dispute as to law or fact could be finally decided by the Permanent Court of International Justice. .

Such were the special provisions for the Poland that signed the German treaty at Versailles on 28 June 1919. Three days earlier the Supreme Council, recognizing accomplished facts, and moved by the danger from Bolshevism, had authorized her to occupy and to administer eastern Galicia. Respect for the wishes of the Ruthenes, however, caused this quasi-mandate to be made terminable after five-and-twenty years.

On the signature of the German and the Polish Minorities agreements, the Four ceased to direct the Conference. Lloyd George and Wilson returned to their own lands, the one to receive a rapturous ovation; the other to encounter a far different fate. Their successors, the Five, over whom Clemenceau still presided, took up the Austrian

treaty, which was drafted but not yet finally revised. France now had a second representative in Pichon; Britain for two months spoke through Balfour, who was succeeded in September by a penetrating critic of imperial Germany, Sir Eyre Crowe; while, although Wilson's principles still bound the Conference, his successor, Lansing, could not voice them with their author's force and weight.

Poland, whose western frontier still waited for the Upper Silesian plebiscite, had a threefold interest in the Austrian negotiations. The distribution of territory between the reduced Austria and Hungary, the new Czechoslovakia and triple Serbian monarchy and the expanded Rumania completed the constellation in which she would be the leading power. Some lesser but most difficult territorial questions, that of Teschen chief among them, had been rather adjourned than solved. The Polish war against the Bolsheviks continued, and the major question of Pole and Ruthene in eastern Galicia remained to embarrass the future. The Galicians' right to self-determination, moreover, was not extinguished by the license to the Poles to occupy the defenceless region.

The work of settlement was hindered, and the Polish position influenced, by more than one outbreak of hostilities. Early in 1919, the Rumanians and Czechoslovaks had moved forward into disarmed Hungary. Late in March, the Allies succeeded in halting them near the racial frontier. Such visible ruin of the Magyar empire, however, brought about the rule of Béla Kun, a Bolshevik Jew. Thus led, the Hungarians drove back the Czechoslovaks, but at midsummer withdrew at the request of the Allies. Late in July, however, they attacked the Rumanians, who replied by occupying Budapest. Though plainly unable to suppress Bolshevik rule in Hungary, the Allies succeeded during the autumn in persuading the Rumanians to withdraw.

The contrast, none the less, between the claims of the Conference to determine boundaries and impose minority treaties, on the one hand, and, on the other, its obvious impotence to deal with Bolshevism or with accomplished facts could not fail to impress the newer states. Poland flung herself into an offensive, which, if successful, might bring the Ukraine, as well as Lithuania, into a future federation. During the autumn, indeed, much of Europe was in chaos. In mid-September, five-and-twenty war-fronts could be distinguished.

The Russian Bolsheviks were contending with various White armies, while the victorious Poles drove them far from Wilno and could contemplate striking at Kiev. The Allies demanded that the Germans should cease to garrison the Baltic States, and the British



quitted Archangel. D'Annunzio seized Fiume, the city which largely deprived the Conference of effective Italian co-operation. War between Italy and Jugoslavia threatened. While the League of Nations, now hurriedly launched by treaty, prepared to meet, the prospect that the United States would join it faded.

Throughout the period of the Conference, few questions did more to poison the relations between states than that of Teschen. In easternmost Silesia, north of the Jablunka pass, the railway from Budapest to Berlin descends the valley of the Olza to cross the line connecting Cracow and Warsaw with Vienna. Midway lies Teschen town, the heart of an ancient duchy covering less than 900 square miles, but important for its coal and its communications. Teschen duchy, with less than 450,000 inhabitants, was mainly Roman Catholic, and by a considerable majority, Polish in speech. About twice as many of its people spoke Polish as spoke Czech, and the Germans, though important in the towns and middle classes, were less than 80,000 strong. In the west, Poles were few; in the east and centre, very numerous. The existing coal-mines lay in the north, west of the Olza.

The Czechs, whose strongest argument was economic necessity, demanded the coalfield and the main railway at the least. The Poles, while conceding western Teschen, claimed the bulk, mainly in virtue of the national sentiment of the population. If the main railway were assigned to them, they would pay half the cost of constructing two others between Moravia and Slovakia. A provisional frontier had been agreed on by the inhabitants in November 1918, the Czechs occupying roughly the western fifth part of the duchy. In the December elections, however, the Poles treated their holding as a part of their state, and in January 1919, with some countenance from the Allies, the Czechs drove them back by force.

This action, Lloyd George complained, interrupted the work of the Conference for the sake of a region of which he had never heard. An Inter-Allied Commission, however, fixed a provisional boundary, following in the main the line of the Olza, and the Conference recommended the two governments to undertake direct negotiation. The Czechs, however, refused a plebiscite. Hence, at the end of September, the Supreme Council directed a plebiscite under its own control, in which officials were debarred from voting and the units were communes, not individuals. In the disputed portions of two Slovak counties, Spiš (Zips) and Orava, a like procedure was to be followed.

In January 1920, a Plebiscite Commission succeeded to the Inter-Allied Commission at Teschen, but nine days earlier the Peace Conference had ceased to be. It was the Allied Governments who had the task of securing the consent of Poland and Czechoslovakia to a frontier which they had drawn. This gave Teschen town to Poland, but the railway and coal-mines to Czechoslovakia. The electricity works, it was noted, went to one state, the gasworks to the other. The Slovak counties were so divided as to give Poland north-east Orava and north-western Spiš (Zips), while the Ambassadors' Conference was to help the two states to settle economic questions, especially those of coal and transport. The Poles, then in mortal peril from the Bolsheviks, could not but comply (28 July 1920). A trans-Olzan Polish *irredenta* thus came into being, and throughout the following decade international concord suffered.

It remained for the fortunes of war to determine the Polish frontiers with Russia and Lithuania, and for plebiscites in the north and south-west to form the basis for those with Germany. Thus constituted, Poland gained a seat on the League Council (1926), but the decline of League authority inevitably frustrated the designs of the Peace Conference. The resurgence of German and of Russian arms could not but endanger every state that lay between them.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FRONTIERS

1919-1923

THE World War ended several years before Poland could finally fix her frontiers by plebiscites and war. The Versailles Treaty left open the question of frontier between Poland and Germany in Upper Silesia and in several districts of West and East Prussia until plebiscites should give the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers a basis for its decision. The treaties with Austria at St Germain-en-Laye (10 September 1919) and with Hungary at Trianon (4 June 1920) contained no provisions as to the territory which Poland would receive. The Poles had taken possession of western Galicia on the collapse of Austria, in October 1918; they were fighting for east Galicia and the Duchy of Cieszyn (Teschen), and for Spiš (Zips) and Orava, which they claimed on the basis of ethnographic predominance. In the east, the treaties made no mention of Poland's frontier either with Lithuania, then organizing herself as a separate state, or with Russia.

#### I. THE CIESZYN PROVINCE, SPIŠ AND ORAVA

A military conflict with Czechoslovakia, which claimed Cieszyn and the formerly Hungarian territory of Spiš and Orava, was a surprise for Poland. The relations between the Austrian Czechs and Poles had always been correct. The two nations had often united against German centralism. Poles in Austrian Government service had endeavoured to secure for the Czechs guarantees as to their language and nationality. Poles had repeatedly rejected very advantageous offers of the consolidation of their national position in Galicia, if only they would support Austrian centralism against the Czechs. Cooler relations were only due to the Czech leaning towards Russia, as the protectress of the Slavs, with whose help they hoped to regain their independence. During the war, relations grew more cordial, both Czechs and many Poles siding with the Allies. In 1917, a political meeting in Prague, ostensibly to celebrate the jubilee of the theatre, was attended even by Polish members of Parliament, and a warm note sounded in the speeches. Both were menaced by the

Germans, while the highly developed Czech industry had a ready and important market in Poland.

Close upon the collapse of Austria (5 November 1918) the Polish National Council and the Czechoslovak Committee, the two spontaneous representative bodies, concluded a satisfactory agreement on the line of ethnographical demarcation for administrative and military purposes. Thus the district of Frydek and a small part of Freistadt fell to the Czechs, the remainder to the Poles. Relations were not impaired when an order, arbitrarily issued by the commander of the Allied forces in Hungary, made the Polish troops retire from Spiš and Orava, and put these ethnographically Polish areas into the hands of the Czechs. It was believed that their ownership would be settled without difficulty at a later date.

The line, however, lasted but two and a half months. Quite unexpectedly the Czechs fell upon the insignificant Polish forces in Cieszyn (23 January 1919). Whatever troops Poland had were then fighting for Lwów, and the Czech assault cut off her only land communication with the Allies. The Czechs easily reached the Vistula. But the Polish population, especially the miners, flew to arms and a few small detachments were also sent from Cracow. The Czechs were forced to retreat; and would have been driven from the whole province but for an agreement which the Allies had in the meantime brought about (3 February 1919). This left the Czechs a considerable part of the county of Freistadt with an important railway station, Bohumin, and not a little of the district of Cieszyn; but the civil institutions remained within the line of 5 November 1918.

At the desire of the Allies, Poles and Czechs discussed the frontier in the summer of 1919 at Cracow, but in vain. The Poles claimed a settlement by plebiscite, and the Supreme Council accepted (10 September 1919). This included the whole of the Cieszyn province, while of Spiš and Orava only little fragments were included, far less than the Poles claimed. An International Commission under Count Manneville of France came to Cieszyn and took over the government. The Polish and Czech officials now served the Commission, while the troops were removed and the territory was separated by a customs frontier from both States. A separate subcommission for Spiš and Orava held office at Nowy Targ in Poland.

The clash of conflicting claims, however, stirred up such passions among the population that the Commission could not enforce the peaceful conditions essential to a plebiscite. To avoid delay the Poles proposed, in the spring of 1920, the arbitration of the Belgian King

Albert. This manner of settlement encountered obstacles in the Polish Diet, and was definitely rejected by the Czechoslovaks. Meanwhile the Supreme Council decided to take the matter into its own hands; and Poland, whose very existence was menaced by the Bolshevik onslaught, accepted (10 July 1920) the Council's decision finally formulated. On 28 July 1920, less than one-half of the region was assigned to Poland (1002 sq. km. out of 2222, with a population of 142,000 out of 435,000); to Czechoslovakia were assigned the districts of Frydek and Freistadt and the greater part of the district of Cieszyn, with the railway station of Cieszyn, while the town itself was allotted to Poland. Poland lost approximately 140,000 Poles, with all the coal mines and even Karvina which is ethnographically Polish. The Czechs also kept Třinec with its ironworks, and the whole of the Bohumin-Jablunkov railway line. The decision relating to Orava and Spiš was likewise disadvantageous for Poland; she received mere scraps of the plebiscite territories, with a population of 30,000, while the Czechs took over 40,000 Poles. Poland kept twenty-seven villages, Czechoslovakia forty-four.

Poland felt that she had been wronged by this decision and this affected her subsequent policy towards Czechoslovakia.

## 2. UPPER SILESIA

The Treaty of Versailles had assigned to Poland but a small part of Prussian Silesia, while in Upper Silesia it provided for a plebiscite. The right of voting for the rule of Poland or Germany was given to all natives or residents of the province over twenty years of age. The final decision as to the frontiers was to be based upon the results of the vote which was to be taken by communes, the geographical and economic conditions of these communes being, however, duly taken into consideration. The region involved comprised 10,753 sq. km. with a population of about 2,000,000.

Shortly afterwards, in August 1919, the Polish population in this province rose against the harsh rule of the Germans. The Polish Government, for reasons of an international character, could not help the insurgents, though public opinion demanded it. The Germans soon suppressed the rising, and some of the insurgents fled to Poland from the impending vengeance.

The Treaty of Versailles once ratified, a Commission under General Lerond of France came to Upper Silesia with some detachments of the Allied forces. The minor German officials remained and

were insufficiently controlled by the Commission, on which a native Silesian and member of the Diet, W. Korfanty, represented the Polish Government. There was continuous friction between Poles and Germans, and at the communal elections the Poles got the upper hand. In August 1920, the Polish population again rose in arms; this violent protest of the Poles terrorized by German armed bands secured the removal of the German police and the introduction of a militia composed of Germans and Poles.

As the economic and legal structure of Upper Silesia were entirely different from those of the other parts of Poland, a period of transition had to precede its complete incorporation. The Polish Diet, therefore, voted (15 July 1920) a Statute for the Voyvodeship of Silesia which was to include the part of the Cieszyn province and the area of Upper Silesia that Poland expected to obtain. The Statute provided for autonomy and extensive local self-government, as well as for a separate Silesian Diet with powers of legislation concerning the status of the Polish and German languages, the constitution of the state and municipal authorities, education, economic affairs, etc., together with the disposal by the Silesian Diet of most of the revenue. Additions were made later. The Germans endeavoured to neutralize the effects of the Statute but recognized the possibility of autonomy being obtained by Silesia if desired.

Germany counted upon the support of Britain. To weaken the resistance of France, Germany began to connect the payment of reparations with the retention of Upper Silesia. She believed that France, burdened with the reconditioning of her devastated areas, would at that price agree to leave Silesia in her hands. With France the manoeuvre proved a complete failure. It was more successful with Britain, where Germany found support, particularly from some of the economists such as J. M. Keynes, whose book awakened strong echoes. It was argued that Germany should not be weakened as a British market, and that Poland could not administer the industries and mines of Silesia; it was also considered possible to co-operate with Germany in order to capture the immense markets of Russia. The crisis then prevailing in Britain, whose trade balance was becoming less and less satisfactory, was adroitly turned to account by German propaganda. The idea of a rapprochement with Germany found a vigorous advocate in the then Prime Minister, Mr Lloyd George, in spite of the strained relations which followed Germany's refusal to accept the terms imposed upon her for the payment of reparations.

The plebiscite was fixed eventually for 20 March 1921. Poland claimed that residents alone should vote and not those—Germans for the most part—who, though natives of Silesia, had severed all connection with it. The wording of the Treaty, however, was strictly followed. The Supreme Council, influenced by Britain, also rejected the Polish demand that emigrants should not vote on the same date as the local population. Consequently on 20 March Germany brought nearly 200,000 emigrants to vote in Silesia.

The plebiscite was held peacefully, but gave no clear result. In a large part of Silesia, Poland gained a great majority of the communes, but larger towns, German islands in the midst of Polish territory, which had only come into being in the nineteenth century, voted German. In all 678 communes voted for Poland as against 844 for Germany, while of the individual votes Germany obtained 707,000, Poland 479,000. In the eastern districts, which are economically the most important, being rich in coal and factories, the Poles secured a numerical preponderance, though this was not everywhere sufficiently great; on the other hand the western districts, which are agricultural and ethnographically Polish, voted in great part for Germany. The emigrants who had arrived *ad hoc* turned the scales and inspired the German population.

Germany, disregarding the provisions of the Treaty which stated that the votes should be taken by communes, and contrary to its inclination for a division of Silesia, began to claim the whole of Silesia, while Korfanty demanded the regions where the Poles had a majority of the votes. The "Korfanty line" included the whole of the industrial portion and a small part of the agricultural one, viz. the land as far as the Oder river above Kosel, then along a line running north-east, west of Strzelec and east of Oleśna. In that district 420,000 individual constituents and 560 communes had voted for Poland as against 400,000 constituents and 150 communes for Germany.

The Commission failed to submit proposals to the Supreme Council on the basis of the plebiscite. The British and Italian delegates favoured ceding to Poland the districts of Rybnik and Pszczyna (Pless) only, while the French delegate proposed a new line somewhat less advantageous than that of Korfanty but which left the whole industrial district in Polish hands. The British proposal caused indescribable indignation among the Upper Silesians, and a third rising broke out in the night of 2-3 May. Korfanty assumed its leadership, having previously resigned from the Commission. Almost all the area within the Korfanty line was occupied and the German

officials expelled; in the towns alone the Allied officials remained. Unfortunately some of the Italian soldiers were killed. In Britain, Poland was charged with infringing the peace which the world was longing for, and with attempting to forestall decisions by *faits accomplis*; Lloyd George attacked her with unprecedented violence in a speech on 13 May. Likewise in Italy public opinion was roused by the regrettable incidents with the Italian soldiers. France alone stood firm on the side of Poland, straining her relations with Britain.

But the Germans also began military operations; volunteers came to German Silesia from all over the Reich, especially from Bavaria, the German Government even allowing them to be given guns and armoured trains. While the Polish Government immediately closed the frontier, General Hoefer took command of the German forces. After about a month's fighting between Poles and Germans, the Commission, with a considerable force from Britain, effected a cessation of hostilities, and, in the latter part of June, the belligerents agreed to withdraw their troops within ten days.

In the meantime the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Sforza, proposed that the region should be so divided as to give Poland also the districts of Katowice, Beuthen, Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz) and part of Zabrze (Hindenburg); this meant a division of the industrial region of which Germany would have received the greater part (Zabrze and Gleiwitz). Soon after this, however, Sforza's Cabinet having resigned, his successor, della Toretta, inclined towards the British point of view. The difference between France and Britain became very acute. The German Government, under Dr Wirth, seemed ready to comply with the financial clauses of the Treaty on condition that the whole of Silesia should remain German. Britain stressed her willingness to strengthen that Government. She urged a rapid settlement while France advocated delay; neither did Britain agree to a French proposal to send another strong force to Upper Silesia before the problem was solved.

In these circumstances Lloyd George attended the Supreme Council in Paris. An effort was made to secure agreement by submitting the problem to a special committee of experts. Lloyd George, however, rejected all compromise beyond adding a small part of the neighbourhood of Mysłowice. To save the unity of the Allies, it was agreed (12 August 1921) to submit the question to the Council of the League of Nations, whose findings were to be unreservedly accepted.

The League Council, having had the matter examined by a Commission of representatives of disinterested States, gave its verdict on



12 October 1921. The frontier between Poland and Germany was so fixed that Poland received the whole of the districts of Pszczyna, Katowice (urban and rural), Królewska Huta, almost the whole of the district of Rybnik, the part of the district of Raciborz (Ratibor) which lies on the right bank of the Oder, the greater part of the districts of Tarnowskie Góry and Lubliniec, and fragments of the districts of Zabrze, Beuthen and Gleiwitz, without, however, those three towns. This area comprised about 3000 sq. km. with almost 1,000,000 inhabitants. Thus, besides the agricultural districts of Pszczyna and Rybnik, Poland was to have a considerable part of the industrial area. Poland was assigned 76 per cent of the coal mines (59 mines out of 67), 97 per cent of the iron ore, 82 per cent of the tin, 71 per cent of the lead, 50 per cent of the sulphur, 50 per cent of the coke, all the tin-works and lead-works (a total of 13), all the ore-smelting plants (13), all the flax-spinning mills, 5 tin-rolling mills out of 8, about 50 per cent of the iron-works, the power-station and the factory of nitrogen products of Chorzów.

But the League Council did not confine itself to tracing the line which was to divide Upper Silesia. Taking into consideration the fact that the industrial district was closely linked together by economic bonds (the water-supply and electric systems, the mutual exchange of raw materials and semi-manufactured products by the different concerns, and the location of the workmen's settlements) the Council proposed that, for fifteen years, special regulations should maintain to a certain extent the economic connection of the two parts with each other and in part with Germany.

All these proposals were accepted by the Conference of Ambassadors and were converted into a decision of the Principal Allied Powers on 20 October 1921.

In Poland the fact that a Polish population of several hundred thousand souls remained beyond the bounds of the Polish State was painful to bear. Nevertheless Poland accepted the decision, consenting also to the transitory arrangements for fifteen years, although the Treaty of Versailles did not compel her to do so. Germany also accepted the decision, declaring, however, that she was wronged.

Long and toilsome negotiations then began between Poland and Germany on the treaty by which they were to regulate conditions in Upper Silesia for fifteen years, Mr Calonder mediating as Delegate of the League. Eventually a Convention embodying 606 clauses was signed at Geneva on 15 May 1922, soon to be ratified by the two Parliaments.

By the Convention, the mutual exchange of commodities between the German and the Polish parts of Upper Silesia was secured for fifteen years; regulations were framed for the joint use of the water-supplying systems, and electric-power stations; unity in the railway administration and a homogeneous system of unions of employers and workers were retained. Those who had dwellings on one side of the frontier and their occupations on the other were entitled to cross the frontier without difficulties. Germans in the Polish part were guaranteed the free use of their language, even in relations with State authorities, in a higher degree than under the Treaty which Poland had signed with the five Principal Allied Powers regarding the rights of national minorities. The same rights were secured for fifteen years to Polish residents in the German part. Poland relinquished in part her rights to the liquidation of German estates, retaining such rights only after fifteen years with relation to the great industrial plants and to one-third of the great agricultural estates (above 100 hectares, i.e. 247,100 acres). The German mark remained legal tender, but Poland might introduce the Polish mark in its place, subject to certain reservations.

To ensure the observance of the Treaty, a Mixed Commission at Katowice was set up, and a Tribunal of Arbitration at Beuthen, under presidents appointed by the League of Nations.

With boundless enthusiasm the population received the Polish troops, which took possession, under General Szeptycki, of the above-mentioned part of Upper Silesia and the province of Cieszyn—henceforth the voivodeship of Silesia—early in July.

### 3. THE PLEBISCITE TERRITORY OF WEST AND EAST PRUSSIA

The peace terms of 7 May 1919, stipulated that the assignment to Poland of a small part of West and East Prussia would depend upon the will of the population. The Supreme Council had been persuaded that the Polish-speaking population, the so-called Mazurs in East Prussia, were at heart Germans; their Protestantism was a not unimportant consideration, especially for the United States. The stipulation of a plebiscite was maintained in the Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919, for an area comprising four districts of West Prussia on the right bank of the Vistula, Sztum (Stuhm), Susz (Rosenburg) and those parts of Malbork (Marienburg) and Kwidzyn (Marienwerder), and a second in southern East Prussia, namely the regency of Olsztyn (Allenstein), exclusive of Działdowo (Soldau) and the

district of Olesko (Oletzko). These two areas comprised almost 15,000 sq. km. and above 700,000 souls. Inter-Allied Commissions were to rule until the plebiscite; the date, however, was not fixed. The regulations were the same as for Upper Silesia. Even if Vistula districts fell to Germany, however, Poland was to control the river and its right bank to the distance necessary for its improvements, while the Germans must not fortify those districts, and Poland would be guaranteed railway connection with Danzig across that territory if all of it were not assigned to her. Conversely, Poland must allow the population of East Prussia access to the Vistula and railway connection with Germany across Polish territory.

The plebiscite in both districts of Prussia coincided with Poland's defeat in the Bolshevik war; it was taken on 11 July 1920, and proved unfavourable for Poland. The population, particularly the Mazurs in East Prussia, brought up in German schools, systematically denationalized, but at the same time cared for by the state, which had repaired the devastation by the Russians during the World War, had never had its national consciousness properly developed. The Allied Commission did not leave sufficient freedom for activity in favour of Poland; the Prussian officials remained, the clergy and schoolmasters made propaganda for Germany. The right to vote was also given by the treaty to all natives, even though they had lived indefinitely in Germany, and the Germans brought them over in crowds for the plebiscite. The number of votes for Poland was far below the lowest estimates. The Allied Powers assigned both districts to Germany (August 1920), Poland obtaining only two villages opposite Gniew (Mewe) the little port of Kurzybrak, the bridge-head of Opalenie and, in compliance with the treaty, a scanty strip of land on the right bank of the Vistula. Poland lost the possibility of possessing the railway which forms the shortest link between Warsaw and Danzig.

#### 4. EAST GALICIA

Upon the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the military authorities in east Galicia made it easy for the Ruthenians (Ukrainians) to assume control of that region, whose population is very mixed. On 1 November 1919, an armed force took possession of the capital Lwów (Lemberg) whose population is Polish and partly Jewish, with barely a few per cent Ruthenian. Besides Lwów, the Ruthenians also occupied much of east Galicia. A fight for Lwów began; on the Polish side the fighters were local youths, children

and even women. After some weeks (22 November) Lwów was in Polish hands, but the Ukrainian troops remained outside the city, which was deprived of water and light.

At the Peace Conference, the question of Galicia was hotly discussed. In the latter part of April 1919, the Supreme Council appointed a special Commission to bring about a truce, and brought great pressure to bear upon Poland. At this juncture the Ukrainians renewed their offensive; the Poles replied by a counter-offensive. The latter (in May 1919) thrust the Ukrainians back from the region of Lwów, and soon afterwards forced them to retreat beyond the eastern border of Galicia, the river Zbrucz. On 25 June 1919, the Supreme Council authorized Poland to occupy the region as far as this river. All Galicia was now in Polish hands, giving Poland direct contact with Rumania, and the possibility of joint action in resisting the forward march of the Soviets. The Rumanian forces occupied parts of Galicia, but later loyally retired. The former boundary line between Rumania and Bukovina became the Polish-Rumanian frontier.

The Allies, however, did not consider the possession of Galicia as settled. On 21 November 1919, the Supreme Council accepted a scheme for almost the entire area on the right bank of the river San, leaving the town of Przemyśl on the Polish side, but including the oil-fields in a region which Poland was to hold for twenty-five years, after which its fate was to be settled by plebiscite. Meantime the region was to remain under the protection of the League of Nations as an autonomous unit, the terms of the autonomy being precisely defined.

A scheme whereby for twenty-five years the fire of partisan strife would be kept smouldering, and the reconstruction of the region might be held up, roused a strong protest of the Polish population in east Galicia, as well as of the Government and Diet; and Paderewski and the Cabinet shortly afterwards resigned. After negotiations in Paris, the decision was delayed and appeasement ensued. The problem again came to the front together with the plan of a treaty for the division of the territory of former Austria (at Sévres, 10 August 1919); this the Polish delegate refused to sign. Only on 15 March 1923, was the possession of east Galicia by Poland recognized by the Supreme Council.

## 5. WAR AND PEACE WITH THE SOVIETS

As the German army retreated from the territories east of Poland, the Bolshevik troops advanced westwards from the interior of Russia and the Ukraine, until they came into contact with the Polish force.

They occupied historic Lithuania, which had once belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy, with the exception of strictly ethnographic Lithuania, that is to say White Russia, where a considerable admixture of the Polish element is manifest in the eastern parts, while in the western it is predominant in a number of districts. The Bolsheviks also captured Wilno, where the Polish inhabitants have an absolute majority, while the Jewish element is considerable and the Lithuanians number but a few per cent. The Bolsheviks then advanced as far as Grodno, and the small Polish army was forced into a war with a new invader. Towards the end of the winter, the weak but brave troops began an offensive, and by Eastertide (19 April 1919) Wilno was regained. The offensive under General Szeptycki was continued during the summer, till the Dwina and the Upper Dnieper were reached. Part of Livonia, with the town of Dwinsk, was immediately returned to Latvia, as Poland did not claim that territory—the home of many Poles since the days of pre-partition Poland.

Upon the capture of Wilno the Chief of State, Joseph Piłsudski, acting as commander-in-chief, on 22 April 1919 proclaimed to the population of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania his desire to give them the possibility of solving their internal problems of nationality and religion according to their own wish, without any pressure from Poland. The civil authorities, said the proclamation, would facilitate for the people the manifestation of their desires through the medium of representatives freely chosen by equal, secret, universal and direct vote, regardless of sex.

It was necessary to take into account the stipulation of the Allies that they would determine Poland's eastern border; but they waited to see what course events would take, and what Russia's fate would be. On 18 July 1919, the Supreme Council separated the spheres of action of the Polish and Lithuanian forces by establishing the so-called Foch line along the Niemen, after which it ran parallel to the Grodno-Wilno-Dwinsk railway. Only by a resolution taken on 2 December, and made known six days later, did they fix a temporary frontier by authorizing the extension of Polish sovereignty as far as the "line of 8 December". Of the territories lying beyond the former frontier of Congress Poland, the district of Białystok alone was awarded to Poland, while the northern part of the Province of Suwałki, which of old had belonged to Poland, now fell to Lithuania. It was stated, however, that the decision was not conclusive as to any rightful Polish claims to territories lying beyond that line.

Meanwhile in Poland two parties sprang up, one in favour of

federation with Lithuania and White Russia, while the other advocated incorporation.

The federalists strove for the reconstruction of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with its frontiers between the Union of Lublin (1569) and the partition of Poland. This territory, comprising ethnographical Lithuania and White Russia, pervaded with the Polish element and Polish civilization, would have united anew with Poland as of old. The parts of this Grand Duchy in which different national elements predominate were to maintain a certain distinctness, forming a kind of cantons, such as the Lithuanian, the Polish-White Russian, mainly Catholic, and the White Russian, mainly Orthodox. Poland would have doubly profited, being united with a considerable state and being separated by it from Russia; while the principle of the self-determination of peoples would have been safeguarded, had the state embodied the entire Lithuanian and White Russian population. The population would not have been forced to assume Polish nationality, but would have been helped to build up its own state; thus, its friendship would have been gained while the Polish element, numerically strong and superior in intelligence, would have acquired a leading position, so that in time the ties joining the country with Poland would, with their mutual consent, have bound the two nations still closer together.

The weakness of this scheme lay in the fact that the Lithuanians would hear of no such state. Their aversion for the Poles had long been roused by Russia, and by certain circles among themselves which feared polonization. The fact that the Poles possessed the great estates while the Lithuanians composed the masses of peasantry made political struggle easy by turning class-hatred to account. The Germans, who occupied the Lithuanian and White Russian territories, although when they captured Wilno they called it the "gem of Poland", followed the same policy of playing off the Lithuanians against the Poles.

Now therefore Lithuania endeavoured to keep up good relations with the Germans, who did not refuse her their support. Her politicians opposed the scheme of a union with Poland, and rejected all thoughts of reconstructing the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, realizing that in such a state they would be a minority. But they could not bring themselves to create a Lithuanian state comprising only ethnographically Lithuanian territories, since such a state would consist of hardly anything but the region of Kovno. They strove to occupy an area where the population was Polish and White Russian

but which lay outside ethnographical Lithuania; this area included Wilno which they planned to make their capital. The claims of Poland and of Lithuania to Wilno could not possibly be reconciled. Consequently a Polish-Lithuanian agreement was out of the question.

A second scheme was that of incorporation. Its advocates contended for integral embodiment by Poland of the part of White Russia where the Polish population is in a relative majority, it being chiefly Catholic and pervaded by Polish civilization. This would become a component part of the Republic of Poland, while the remaining lands, where the Orthodox White Russians preponderate, would return to Russia. In view of the German menace, it was argued, Poland should seek to be on good terms with Russia. A buffer-state would be the scene of unending contention between the two nations; moreover, a merely federative union of this territory with Poland would render impossible the outflow into those sparsely inhabited areas of the surplus agricultural population from Poland.

The first scheme was supported principally by the Socialist Party; of the Poles living in those regions the owners of large estates chiefly approved of it, seeing that in case of incorporation they would not be on the Polish side. It was championed by the Chief of State, Pilsudski; the activities of the Polish administration in Lithuania likewise inclined towards federation. On the other hand many of the local Poles opposed union, particularly in Wilno, which demanded unreserved incorporation with Poland. The programme of incorporation was formulated by the National Democratic Party and several times approved by the Diet. The Western Powers had no sufficient knowledge of the conditions existing in Lithuania and White Russia. In view of their relation to a future Russia, they did not wish to deprive her of territories such as White Russia which, they thought, were her due on the ethnographical basis. The problem was eventually solved by the Polish-Soviet war and the conflicts with Lithuania.

On 29 January 1920, the Bolshevik Government made overtures to the Polish Government for peace. The Poles doubted their sincerity and were divided as to whether negotiations should be undertaken or war continued. The Western States left Poland full freedom of action; Britain was for peace while France was less inclined that way, supporting General Wrangel who was threatening the Bolsheviks from the Crimea. It was stated, however (in the London resolution of 24 February 1920), that, if Poland chose to carry on the contest, the Western Powers would come to her aid only in the event of her being attacked within her ethnographical frontiers.

After some hesitation the Poles decided (27 March) to open negotiations; but the Bolsheviks (20 April) refused to negotiate at Borysów, the place which Poland had indicated. They opened an unsuccessful offensive from the Dwina in the spring. Poland responded with an offensive started in April against Kiev, which General Rydz-Śmigły took on 8 May 1920. The northern front ran northward from Kiev along the Dnieper, and then along the Berezina and the Dwina. The enemy to all appearances was completely routed.

Parallel with the military operations ran the political, pushed forward by the Chief of State, Piłsudski. He helped the defeated Ukrainian army of Hetman Petlura to organize itself, and to fight with the Poles against the Bolsheviks. His policy was to help the Ukraine to become an independent state which, in return, would renounce East Galicia and western Volhynia. He therefore issued a proclamation to the Ukrainian population (26 April 1920) worded like that issued at Wilno. His occupation of Ukrainian territory was to be purely military, leaving the civil administration to the Petlura Government at Kamieniec Podolski. He designed to separate southern Poland from Russia by a state which must lean towards Poland, since Russia could never renounce her claim to a fertile region rich in coal and ore, and barring her access to the Black Sea. Against this it was argued that the Ukraine did not feel the need of emancipation from Russian rule, and that it lacked the creative elements necessary for founding a free state, while success would cause everlasting enmity between Poland and Russia.

Soon after the capture of Kiev, the Bolsheviks, inflaming Russian patriotism by showing the danger of losing the Ukraine, gathered all their forces to attack Poland. From Smolensk they opened a northern offensive on 14 May 1920, which the Polish army managed to repel. Close upon this their cavalry, well led by Budienny, on 8 June broke through the Polish line in the southern sector between the Dnieper and the Dniester and fell upon its rear. This compelled the Poles to retreat from Kiev (11 June), to contract the front, to shift it back to the line of Teterów, then to the rivers Horyń, Styr and Zbrucz, finally to the rivers Bug and Złota Lipa. The Bolsheviks occupied much of East Galicia, and were soon in sight of Lwów (Lemberg).

Their advance in the south was connected with a successful offensive in the north opened on 7 July by their young commander Tukhachevski. The Poles were forced to retire. The centre and right



wing found a good point of support in the Baranowicze-Ogiński Canal line, but the left wing, on the river Wilia, gave way and the Bolsheviks reached the Niemen. This rout enabled them to advance with incredible speed, and compelled other parts of the front to retreat. On 14 July the Bolsheviks took Wilno, on 20 July, Grodno, and entered Congress Poland. On and on went their troops, especially the right wing, so that they occupied the right bank of the Vistula from Włocławek by way of Płock as far south as Warsaw, the capital being in immediate danger. Further south they crossed the Bug at Brest Litovsk, also marching towards Warsaw.

The Bolshevik success threatened not only loss of territory and devastation but the overthrow of a social order which had arisen from revolution, the probable disappearance of Poland as a State and a new enslavement. The Bolsheviks aimed at forcing upon her proletarian dictatorship and the socialization of property. A Polish Government after the model of their own was set up at Białystok; Leszczyński was its head, and its members were outstanding communists, such as Julian Marchlewski. From hatred for Poland almost all German opinion joyfully welcomed the invaders, for the Germans hoped thus to regain the Polish territories which they had been forced to relinquish at Versailles. The Germans of Danzig also offered their co-operation, and began to impede the transit of arms and ammunition to Poland through the port. The Czechoslovaks declared themselves neutral, and hampered the supply of munitions from the west which were vital to Poland.

The Polish nation, which had hardly yet felt the war and had lost all interest in it, was slow to realize the danger. The young and inexperienced soldiers, though excellent in attack, became dejected during the retreat, and in some sectors took to flight. But when the Bolshevik army stood on essentially Polish ground, the nation awakened with a start. All political conflicts were set aside, and the adversaries stood shoulder to shoulder in the ranks.

In July, a Council of National Defence replaced the Diet, and undertook both civil and military affairs. At its head stood the Chief of State, Piłsudski, with the Prime Minister and three Cabinet Ministers, the Marshal of the Diet, ten members of the Diet, chosen from all the important parties, and three representatives of the army. The Council received legislative and executive power in all questions "connected with the carrying on and ending the war and concluding peace", with the reservation that all decisions needing ratification should be subsequently submitted to the Diet. Ladislas Grabski's

Cabinet gave place to one composed of representatives of all the parties; the peasant leader, W. Witos, was appointed Prime Minister, and the socialist leader, I. Daszyński, Vice-Premier. These two appointments symbolized a war waged in the interests of all, without exception, who were Poles at heart.

The whole nation was summoned to resist. The formation of an army of volunteers was entrusted to General Joseph Haller. The first to join it were the University students, schoolboys in the upper forms, and young artisans. General Haller called into being a Committee to counter the Bolshevik propaganda and to animate patriotic feeling. All over the country similar committees were formed. Those who could not bear arms helped by meetings, pamphlets and posters to make the danger known, especially in Warsaw and in west Galicia, where their influence reached every village. Volunteers joined by scores of thousands, and the conscription, which soon followed, gave splendid results. Everyone hurried to assist the "boys" through the Red and the White Cross. The military staff meanwhile exerted itself to drill, equip and arm the men, and, at long last, to open the counter-offensive.

Early in July, the Council of National Defence had sent the then Prime Minister, Grabski, to Spa to invite the aid of the Supreme Council. France was ready to help. Not so Mr Lloyd George, who had previously begun to favour a tightening of Britain's relations with the Bolsheviks, especially in the field of trade, and reproached Poland with having declined—"all through her imperialistic tendencies"—to listen to words of caution when she might have ended her war with Russia. At Spa (10 July 1920) the Allies consented to assist Poland, but on very burdensome conditions. She was required to sign a truce with the Bolsheviks without delay, to draw her forces as far back as the line (of 8 December 1919) traced as her eastern frontier—"the Curzon line", Lord Curzon having fixed its course in a telegram to the Bolshevik Government on 11 July. Wilno was to be given to the Lithuanians, while in the south of Galicia the armies were to keep their positions at the moment of the truce. Britain undertook to convey the proposal of the truce to the Bolsheviks. Subsequently a conference in London was to decide on the conditions of peace under the auspices of the Supreme Council. Moreover, Poland was forced into a promise to accept the Supreme Council's decision with regard to the Lithuanian frontiers, to the future of east Galicia and of the region of Cieszyn, and to a treaty with Danzig. In return it was promised that if Russia refused to accept the truce Poland would be given help, particularly in the shape of war material. Poland accepted

the conditions. France alone, however, sent war material and many excellent officers under General Weygand, former Chief of Staff to Marshal Foch. In co-operation with him the Polish Staff planned the ensuing campaign.

A plan proposed by Piłsudski and elaborated by the Polish Staff was accepted for the counter-offensive; it was risky from the military point of view, but its point of departure was that Warsaw should not be allowed to fall into the enemy's hands, even though this might seem advisable for strategic reasons.

In mid-August the Polish forces, concentrated on the river Wieprz, struck northward under Piłsudski to encircle the Bolshevik forces which had reached Włocławek and Płock, thus forcing them to surrender or to enter East Prussia. The offensive was masterly; splendid spirit had been infused into the army; the success was almost complete. The Bolshevik forces north of Warsaw were duly cut off, scores of thousands captured and the rest driven into Prussia, where the Germans, violating international law, allowed a considerable number to regain their country by way of Lithuania. Congress Poland was soon cleared of the enemy, who was then forced to abandon east Galicia, so that Lwów could breathe once more. Advancing on the heels of the routed Bolsheviks, the Poles crossed the Zbrucz in the south, while in the north they won a hard-fought victory on the Niemen. Wilno was spared in deference to the wishes of Britain and France.

The Bolshevik Government had declined the British invitation to conclude a truce with Poland and to confer in London. They declared themselves ready to negotiate directly with Poland, counting upon victory to enable them to dictate terms. Britain, therefore, advised Poland to apply to the Soviet Government for a truce. This was done without delay, but the Bolsheviks kept postponing the negotiations, wishing to turn their military advantage to good account. The Polish delegation, including members of the Diet of all the strongest parties, was finally allowed to cross the front on 14 August; but negotiations at Mińsk were still protracted. Meanwhile the tables were turned, negotiations interrupted, and it was agreed to continue them at Riga. The Russians were then headed by Joffe, who had already concluded other treaties. The moderation shown by the Poles in their demands, which were agreed upon by all the political parties, and the critical military position of the Soviet Government, both contributed to eliminate obstacles, and the preliminaries, together with an armistice, were signed at Riga on 12 October 1920.

The frontier now ran from the river Dwina, from the Russian-Latvian border, almost due south (Mińsk remaining on the Russian side and the important railway line Baranowicze-Łuniniec-Równe on the Polish), down to the Zbrucz, which it followed till its junction with the Dniester. Beyond the line of 8 December 1919 Poland gained 110,000 sq. km. with a population of 4,000,000, a relative majority of which was Polish (about 30 per cent), while the White Russians and Ukrainians each numbered about 22 per cent. Both parties resigned all claims to war damages, and undertook not to interfere with each other's internal affairs, nor to support organizations aiming at armed conflicts or at overthrowing the other party's political or social order. Provisions were made for the rights of national minorities, the right of option, etc., though the settlement of these and of economic questions was left till the final peace. Poland was guaranteed the return of libraries, archives and works of art of which Russia had dispossessed her since the partitions; she was recognized as free of burdens and engagements resulting from her former incorporation in the Russian State, and was guaranteed that in the clearing of accounts it would be taken into consideration that she had been an asset in the economic life of former Russia.

Before the preliminaries of Riga were ratified, the Polish Government fulfilled their provisions by abandoning Petlura and Bułak-Bałachowicz, who had organized Russian volunteers to fight with the Polish army for an independent White Russian State. Both went ahead to carry on their struggle independently; the former crossed the Zbrucz into the Ukraine, the latter took the direction of Mozyrz. But the Bolsheviks, thanks to the truce, first destroyed General Wrangel's army, occupied the Crimea, then turned against Petlura and Bułak-Bałachowicz, and in December 1922, drove what remained of their men into Poland, where they were interned.

The treaty came into force on 30 April 1921. It included an alteration adding about 3500 sq. km. to the Polish territory, of which she had been bereft since the partitions. A special mixed commission was to reside in Moscow for the return to Poland of her cultural possessions, and it was stipulated that she should receive the archives relating to her actual territories with all the state property upon them. In exchange for the assets which the Polish territory formerly possessed by reason of its share in the economic life of Russia, Poland was awarded 30,000,000 gold roubles, and 29,000,000 gold roubles in compensation for the rolling-stock of her broad-gauged railways. This sum, however, was never paid. The rolling-stock of the narrow

(or normal) gauged railways was to be returned in kind. The treaty likewise stipulated for the return of the property which had formerly belonged to self-governing or municipal bodies, institutions and private persons, and for a clearing of claims arising from Polish capital in public institutions. Trade relations were mutually guaranteed, together with the right of transit, the transit from Germany and Austria to Russia excepted.

Not everyone in Poland was satisfied with the conditions of the peace. It was alleged that insufficient efforts had been made to acquire more distant districts where there was a considerable percentage of Poles and Polish property. The task of the Polish delegates had been the more difficult that all desired peace before the Upper Silesian plebiscite. Indeed the general public in Poland accepted the conditions of the peace with satisfaction, approving of the moderation which was shown in the demands, and trusting that it would become a basis for a permanent settlement between Poland and Russia. As a whole the treaty was accepted with relief as opening a period of peace-time work. Demobilization followed forthwith.

## 6. THE WILNO PROBLEM

During their victorious advance, on 12 July 1920, the Bolsheviks had made a peace promising to hand over Wilno and its district to Lithuania. Lithuania gave them friendly support against Poland, and authorized the Bolshevik army to make use of the ceded territories. During the retreat of the Bolsheviks, she even effected a side attack on the Polish army. Poland was not desirous of winning easy laurels in a war with tiny Lithuania which numbered a bare 2,000,000 inhabitants. She applied to the League of Nations for intervention (4 September). The League, not without difficulty, brought about a cessation of the military operations, and fixed a temporary line of demarcation which both parties accepted at Suwalki on 7 October 1920. Under the terms of this purely military agreement Wilno remained on the Lithuanian side.

But a division of the Polish army, composed mostly of natives of Wilno and its district and commanded by General Żeligowski, seized Wilno and the adjacent territory (9 October 1920), putting the Lithuanians to flight. The order had been secretly given by Piłsudski, who cherished an ardent love for Wilno. This sharpened the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. Poland was charged with imperialism, although Wilno had 56 per cent Poles and no more than 2·5 per cent Lithuanians,

while in the whole district occupied by General Żeligowski and comprising 17,000 sq. km. with a population of 500,000, the Polish element amounted to 68 per cent and the Lithuanian to 18 per cent. Britain and France twice protested against the occupation of Wilno.

Polish opinion was divided. Incorporation was mainly supported by the National Democrats, and gained predominance in the Diet. Others advocated federation. These were backed by the parties of the left, who desired an understanding with ethnographic Lithuania and a union of the Wilno and Kaunas (Kovno) territories with Poland. By this union, Poland would be united with Lithuania in accordance with the old historical tradition, and would also be secure on that side from the military point of view. In the Government which General Żeligowski formed in the Wilno province, now named the State of Central Lithuania, this prevailed.

In the Treaty of Riga, Russia had declared that she considered the possession of those territories a question to be solved by none but Poland with Lithuania. But the Treaty of Versailles, the so-called minor treaty concluded between Poland and the principal Allied Powers, reserved to those Powers their say in determining the eastern frontiers, and Poland, when applying to the League of Nations for mediation, had herself authorized them to interfere. The League Council (Brussels, 28 October 1920) decided upon settlement by a plebiscite to be held in the Wilno district. A special commission under Colonel Chardigny of France was to prepare for the vote, while military forces from several League States occupied the region. Lithuania, however, opposed a plebiscite in which she must be the loser, and the League Council abandoned the idea in favour of direct negotiations between Poland and Lithuania under the presidency of the Belgian, Hymans. After lengthy deliberations, which began on 6 May 1921, Hymans submitted his scheme. He proposed that Wilno and a tract comprising about 1,500,000 inhabitants should be joined with the Kaunas province, so that these two regions should form two autonomous cantons with a joint Government at Wilno, this two-canton State to enter into closer connection with Poland. Its official languages were to be Polish and Lithuanian; the ethnic minorities were to be guaranteed extensive rights. Poland and Lithuania would have a joint foreign policy and conventions for economic and military affairs. A joint economic council was to tighten economic relations resting on a free mutual interchange of products. This agreement would have secured for Poland freedom in the use of seaports and of the Lithuanian territory for transport, military transport included.

A military convention was to provide for similarity in the organization of the army and uniformity in the command in case of joint operations.

Lithuania, however, was averse to this project. She asked for the recognition of Lithuanian as the official language in the entire area, leaving to the Poles the rights of a minority. The Polish delegate, Professor S. Askenazy, declared that the Polish Government was willing that the project should serve as a basis for negotiations, with the reservation that there would be no arbitration, and that representatives of the Wilno district would be invited to participate in the deliberations. The League Council decreed, on 28 June 1921, that direct negotiations should be continued on the basis of Hymans' proposal, enjoining that by 1 September all non-local officials should be removed, together with General Żeligowski's troops, and that a local militia should be formed and subjected to the supervision of a military commission. Lithuania, however, refused to participate in further negotiations (22 July). The League Council none the less secured the consideration of a new Hymans plan, on 3 September, 1921. Wilno and its district, together with the districts of Dzisna and Wileyka—an area of 55,000 sq. km. were now to form an autonomous canton within the limits of a Lithuanian State, the connection between Lithuania and Poland being left to their future agreement. Naturally the Polish Government could not accept a project far worse than the former one, detaching from Poland a region occupied by a Polish majority, and not even stating what form of connection there was to be between the Lithuanian and the Polish States. It therefore refused to discuss the project. Nevertheless, it was unanimously approved by the League Council, and likewise accepted by the Assembly of the League. As both Poland and Lithuania rejected it, the League Council, on 13 January 1922, recognized that the negotiations carried on under League auspices had failed.

Poland then decided to try to solve the Wilno problem by a declaration of the popular choice. Though all Poland and the major part of central Lithuania wished for union, they differed as to its legal form. The federationists were for granting extensive autonomy to the Wilno district, in the hope of connecting the Lithuanian State with Poland, while the incorporation of Wilno would never meet with the approval of the Allies. Their adversaries considered the policy of *rapprochement* with Lithuania unsound, in view of the attitude of the Lithuanians, and dangerous, as stressing its separateness from the Polish State; while interference by the Allied Powers was unlikely. These differences, which naturally had their counterparts among the

population of the Wilno province, caused many conflicts. Thus, in November 1921, Piłsudski demanded an enquiry into the will of the population, not only of central Lithuania but also of Braśław and Lida—which were already incorporated in the Polish State. The whole debatable region, he urged, should have its say, as a safeguard for Poland, should her rights be questioned later. His opponents brought out the vagueness of the territory and the inadvisability of a plebiscite in territory already annexed. The Diet eventually agreed that Braśław and Lida should take part in deciding the fate of the Wilno district by sending representatives to a special parliament to deliberate at Wilno.

General Żeligowski, while still governing central Lithuania, proclaimed elections to the Diet by universal suffrage, and left Wilno, surrendering his position to Alexander Meysztowicz, to avoid all appearance of pressure. The elections took place peacefully on 8 January 1922. Notwithstanding wintry weather and the abstention of the Lithuanians, of part of the White Russians and of almost all the Jews, 64 per cent of the population had participated.

The Diet, which assembled on 3 February 1922, decided that it was only to settle the question of the region's relation to Poland, not to assume all the functions of a legislative body. The drafts of a formula for the mode of union with Poland were practically all for incorporation pure and simple. And the almost unanimous resolution of February 1922 stated that the district of Wilno had become unreservedly and unconditionally an inseparable part of the Republic of Poland, that "the Republic of Poland possessed completely and exclusively the right of national supremacy over the province of Wilno", wherefore the Polish Diet and Government were called upon "immediately to perform the rights and duties flowing from the incorporation of the Wilno province into the Republic of Poland".

Twenty of the members were sent to Warsaw to effect a definite settlement of the matter. On 2 March 1922, however, one half of them refused to sign the Government incorporation bill, because it stated that "the Government declared that the Polish Diet would determine the status of the Wilno province by statute", while the delegates of central Lithuania stood for incorporation pure and simple. The Cabinet resigned, and Britain and France protested against incorporation. By a later compromise, the delegates who had refused consent signed the bill, with the reservation that the Diet would determine the status of the Wilno district by statute "in accordance with the will of the population of the district, expressed



in the resolution of the Wilno Diet". The Diet passed the bill unanimously on 24 March 1922, and also accepted a resolution containing an appeal to the Government that the "statute of Wilno, which was to be submitted to the Diet, should be in accordance with the will of the population as expressed in the resolutions of the Wilno Diet and with the interests of the Republic". At the same time the twenty Wilno delegates became Polish members of the Diet. Thereupon the dissolution of the Wilno Diet was proclaimed (28 March 1922).

Thus the Wilno province became part of the Polish State. It still remained for Poland to obtain the sanction of the Allies. This was effected one year later. Early in 1923 the Polish Government, whose Prime Minister then was General Ladislas Sikorski, and whose Foreign Minister was Alexander Skrzyński, took energetic steps for final recognition. Italy gave support, and the Supreme Council finally decided, on 15 March 1923, to recognize the line drawn by the Treaty of Riga as the Polish-Russian frontier, while for the Polish-Lithuanian it accepted the line of demarcation which had been determined, in place of the neutral zone, by the League Council (13 January and 17 May 1922) on the suggestion of a commission sent to the spot by the League.

As by virtue of the same act Poland's frontiers with Czechoslovakia and also with Rumania were recognized in accordance with previous decisions, the matter of Poland's frontiers was now definitely settled both legally and in fact. Lithuania alone protested, though in vain, against the decision of the Supreme Council, refusing to recognize its competence in the matter, or to enter into diplomatic relations with Poland.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### LITERATURE, ART AND LEARNING IN POLAND SINCE 1863

#### I. FROM 1863 TO 1914

##### I

THE transition from Romanticism to Realism is the most marked feature in the evolution of European civilization about the middle of the nineteenth century. The revolutionary movements which agitated almost all countries of the Continent in 1848 may be considered as the supreme outcome of the romantic impulse in political action; in literature and art, Romanticism had, in the Western countries at least, begun to be replaced by Realism some time before that historic date. In Poland, this process of literary evolution was somewhat delayed by the close interrelations between the nation's political and its spiritual life. Romanticism was already fully in the ascendant in poetry when the national rising of 1830 gave powerful expression to the romantic strain in political aspirations; and the exile of the nation's foremost men after the defeat of that rising turned Paris into the radiating centre of that great romantic literature of Poland which, in the absence of means of political self-expression, served as a national gospel. And when the voice of the great poets became silent in the late 'forties, the romantic inspiration in politics continued to work: it was out of the romantic enthusiasm for an ideal conception of freedom that the disastrous insurrection of 1863 was born. Being the last—and most hopeless—armed effort of the captive nation before the World War, it was also the last outburst of political Romanticism in nineteenth-century Poland. Literary Romanticism was, by that time, dying a lingering death in the works of minor, latter-born poets both at home and abroad. In intellectual life, the astounding new achievements of natural science and their technological applications, as well as the philosophical generalizations based on scientific progress, were having their repercussions among Poland's youth: the system of "positivism", then being elaborated by Auguste Comte, provided a fashionable label for all sorts of "advanced" ideas advocated by young Warsaw journalists of the 'sixties.

One of them, A. Świętochowski (b. 1849), a brilliant controversialist and prolific author of plays and novels "with a purpose", became the Polish Voltaire of his time, trenchantly advocating freedom of thought, democratic social reforms and economic progress in place of mystical religious exaltation and of romantic dreams of new wars for independence.

As the example of Świętochowski illustrates most tellingly, new political, social and economic slogans were bound to become closely associated with the new literary and intellectual tendencies. The disaster of 1863-4 not merely produced a passionate revulsion in public opinion from all ideas of political conspiracy and of military action: it also led to deeper reflection on the causes of the calamitous end of both successive insurrections. It was now realized more thoroughly than before that defeat was largely due to lack of support from the politically uneducated and socially unenfranchised masses of Poland's peasantry. The native Polish tradition of democratic thought, inaugurated by the old Poland's reformed Constitution of 3 May 1791, and reinforced since by periodic waves of Western European influence, had not found effective expression in the way of social reconstruction; and when the abolition of peasant serfdom was ultimately accomplished in the three sectors of the country by the partitioning powers themselves, a national programme of gradual progress towards better things through organized work on the education of the people took the place of the former revolutionary ways of thinking. Together with it, there went an increased interest in economic aims; the road towards a strong political position for the Polish element within each of the three partitioning Empires was seen to lie through the growth of national wealth; and this could be attained, not through futile protest and revolt, but through adaptation to the conditions of day-to-day reality.

## II

All these currents in national opinion after the defeat of 1863 are reflected in the literature of the new era.

Outwardly, in Poland as elsewhere in Europe, the new realism finds expression in the rise of the *novel* to predominance in literature in place of the supremacy of poetry during the Romantic period.

The inexhaustibly productive J. I. Kraszewski (1812-87), author of some 500 volumes of fiction, is perhaps most comprehensively representative of the changes which came over this form of literature, both in subject-matter and in treatment, in the course of his long

literary career. While connected with the past romantic period by his lifelong addiction to the writing of historical novels, and indeed worthy of the title of "the Walter Scott of Poland" by virtue of his numerous works of the kind, he at the same time unceasingly produces, from his early days onward, another unbroken sequence of novels dealing with the contemporary life of Poland around him, both in town and country; and, what is even more characteristic of his wonderful versatility, he mirrors in his work all the changing phases through which Polish public opinion passes in his time; he seems to identify himself with, and again dissociate himself from, romantics and realists, radicals and reactionaries, freethinkers and obscurantists, revolutionaries and opportunists, optimists and pessimists, by turns, and he is alternately idolized and attacked by each of these groups. His work, in its variety and range, constitutes him indeed the father of the modern Polish novel in all its forms—a title he also deserves by his merit in establishing for Polish *belles-lettres* an assured place on the bookshelves of his educated countrymen.

If Kraszewski remains to the end a link with the romantic past, it is another great novelist of slightly later date, B. Prus (A. Głowacki by his real name, 1847-1912), who represents definitely and especially the characteristic tendencies of the new age of realism. In his large-scale novels of contemporary Polish life—*The Emancipated Women* and *The Doll*—he unfolded a panorama of Polish middle-class and professional life in the Russian sector under the altered conditions of the new age; in many of his countless and excellent short stories he presented the life of the city of Warsaw around him with the same loving observation of detail as Dickens had devoted to his London; like Dickens, too, he is pre-eminent as a humorist; while in the *Weekly Chronicles* which he contributed for many years to a popular Warsaw periodical, he rises above the limitations of his period to the noble dignity of a great national moralist with a solid groundwork not only of sound common sense but also of sterling love for mankind in his nature.

Less highly gifted in qualities of pure literary excellence than Prus, Mme E. Orzeszko (1842-1910) has all the characteristic fervour of her generation's belief in the saving power of education; in her voluminous novels she untiringly advocates such causes of social progress and liberal reform as the higher education of women, the deliverance of Jews from the bonds of old superstition and prejudice, the hygienic bringing-up of neglected slum children, and the civic enlightenment of the peasantry—herself remaining deeply attached

throughout to the modest beauty of the Lithuanian countryside and to the simple life of the small country gentry—her own native surroundings and native stock, lovingly described in her most elaborate works.

Realism of the type classically represented by Prus and Mme Orzeszko had in it the germs of two modern extremes: the novel with an obtrusive "social purpose" and the novel deliberately offered as a raw "slice of life". It was with a strong inclination in the first direction that another master of realism, H. Sienkiewicz (1846-1916) began what was to become the most brilliant literary career in modern Poland. A pessimist and a radical in his gloomy youthful sketches of Polish peasant life, he soon turned, even in his most admirable short stories, to subjects inspired by strong patriotic feeling. And it was that feeling which prompted him to search the historical records of the old Poland's self-deliverance from several sweeping foreign invasions in the seventeenth century, and to make the heroic wars of that stormy century the subject-matter of his three huge epic novels, *With Fire and Sword*, *The Deluge*, and *The Little Knight*—jointly known in Poland as *The Trilogy*, and more popular than any other work of modern Polish literature. This masterpiece was followed, in Sienkiewicz's later life, by his great story of early Christianity under Nero—*Quo Vadis?*—whose world-wide fame won the Nobel prize for him, and by yet another novel from Polish history, *The Knights of the Cross*, depicting the mighty conflict between the Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy and the Knights of the Teutonic Order in the early fifteenth century. In comparison with these supreme products of his historical muse, the novels of Sienkiewicz from contemporary Polish life fade into relative insignificance, although they are distinguished by subtlety of psychological portraiture, by his habitual classic felicity of expression, and by a constant vein of humour, of which the figure of Zagłoba—the Polish Falstaff—in the historical Trilogy remains the most memorable outcome.

### III

Realism, under the stimulus of the materialism of natural science, evolved into that extreme literary style for which the French name of *naturalisme* has become accepted. This had its courageous pioneer in Poland in the person of Mme G. Zapolska (1860-1921), who in her somewhat sensational but highly talented writings—both novels and plays—laid bare, in all its ugliness, the hypocrisy, egotism and

stolidity of commonplace middle-class existence in conflict with the impulses of natures more refined or simply more sensitive and passionate: her masterly portrait of a female domestic tyrant, "Mme Dulska", has become proverbial. In its wider application to nature at large, *naturalisme* found a most able exponent in A. Dygasiński (1839-1902), Poland's greatest modern writer of animal stories. Dygasiński deliberately departed from the age-old fabulist tradition of humanizing the animals, and tried to represent them as actuated by the motives proper to them in their distinct sphere; he succeeded most remarkably in his last and crowning work, *The Feast of Life*, in which even symbols of forgotten old Slavonic mythology and folklore were revived to throw a halo of poetic glory and a glamour of philosophical interest round the dramatic facts of "Struggle for Life" and "Survival of the Fittest", established by science as governing the animal kingdom, and here presented in their workings throughout the everlasting Dance of Death, of Hunger, and of Love, in all the wild animal life of wood and field and sky.

The same iron rule of the struggle for existence both against the pitiless elements and against fellow-beings is shown to govern the earth-bound life of the tiller of the soil in the monumental masterpiece which towers high above the fairly numerous other novels of W. S. Reymont (1868-1925). His prose epic *The Peasants*, which made him the second Polish laureate of the Nobel Prize, in its four volumes, named after the four seasons, unfolds a vast panorama of the whole of peasant life in the Polish countryside, with its immemorial toils and elemental pleasures, its fierce personal passions and dramatic social conflicts, its traditional customs ever-repeated against the background of the unending annual pageantry of rural Nature.

If the tragic pathos of changeless Fate seems visibly to brood over the rustic world of Reymont, it is pessimism of a more intensely emotional sort that appears as the quintessence of contemplation of the contemporary Polish scene in the novels of S. Żeromski (1864-1925). With a bitter realism of outlook he combines a truly romantic lyricism of disposition, which gives his works their distinctive character, and which made him the idol of Polish youth in the early twentieth century. Brought up in the shadow of the national disaster of 1863, he drew pictures of the hopelessly grey and oppressive daily reality of provincial life in post-insurrection Russian Poland in such masterly early works as the novel entitled *Homeless People*. But unlike Sienkiewicz, he did not draw much comfort from images of past heroism either in his prose pageant of the achievements of Polish soldiers in

the Napoleonic wars (*Ashes*) or in the heart-rending story by which he commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of 1863 (*The Faithful River*). He tortures his reader by prolonged descriptions of suffering in the pathetic life-story of an unhappy victim of seduction (*A Story of Sin*); and he tortures himself by indulging in gloomy scepticism as to the moral qualities of his own nation, even in that vision of the bleak dawn of the new Poland's freedom, *Before Spring Comes*. It was only the fact of Poland's regained access to the sea-shore which struck notes of real confidence from him in such works of his later days as *The Wind from the Sea*.

## IV

In comparison with the array of great novelists in the last half-century before the War, the roll of eminent poets is brief. Among the poets still connected chronologically with the great Romantic era, one who seems at first sight only to represent the afterglow of it, C. Norwid (1821-83), now, in the light of his late but lasting posthumous fame, appears as the prophetic herald of modern ideas beyond the ken of the Romantic visionaries; they were extreme individualists, he is socially minded; they glorified feeling above all, he reasserts the dignity of reason; they dream of large appeal to the democratic masses, he knows that the highest art can only address itself to the chosen few. And his style—if occasionally as difficult as Browning's—is, like his thought, more in accordance with classical canons of art than with the Romantic doctrines popular in his earlier days; in opposition to the exuberant verbosity of the Romantics he appreciates the eloquent power of silence, preferring to leave his poetic ideas half-expressed and devoid of ornament. And, in a treatise in verse entitled *Promethidion*, he outlined a system of aesthetics which anticipates world-wide notions of a much later day concerning the relation of art to the life of the community.

If this prophetic breath of a new universalism distinguishes Norwid from the poetic philosophy of Poland's great Romantics, it is universalism of another sort, arising out of the intellectual atmosphere of the age, that gives its distinctive character to the poetry of the outstanding philosophical lyricist of the era of positivism, A. Asnyk (1838-97). Himself a sometime insurrectionist of 1863, he resolutely bids goodbye, in his poetry, to the indulgence in fond memories of past heroism, and bids his nation march on, with the rest of the world, towards the goals of intellectual and material progress. His own thought, inspired to its highest flights by the eternal greatness of

Nature—particularly by the majesty of the rocky Tatra Mountains—rises into regions of Platonic idealism and cosmic Pantheism in which the air becomes too thin for the common reader of poetry, especially in an age of prose literature and of essentially materialist philosophy.

The lyrical note of feeling, as contrasted with Asnyk's predominantly intellectual inspiration, is most eminently represented in this period by Poland's first great woman poet M. Konopnicka (1842-1910). A thorough democrat like Asnyk, she makes sympathy for the poor and oppressed, and appreciation of the growing social importance of the peasant and the factory worker, the keynote both of her all-too-effusive lyrics and of her narratives in prose and verse. Among the latter, the most ambitious undertaking is an epic on the sufferings of Polish peasant emigrants in the primeval forests of South America (*Mr Balcer in Brazil*).

It was out of the very depths of democracy itself—from among that peasant mass which constitutes two-thirds of Poland's population—that the mighty genius of modern Poland's greatest philosophical lyricist, J. Kasprówicz (1860-1926), took its rise. Having attained higher education and gained a footing in journalism, he was naturally full, in his earliest lyrics, of the scientific realism and the reforming social morality of the time. Even then, however, a powerful personality prompts him to face the deepest problems of human existence and of the world process. He is confronted by the huge tragic fact of the apparent permanence and unconquerable power of evil in the world; and it is in the struggle of the heroic human spirit against this power that the best energies of Kasprówicz as a philosophical poet are displayed. Many are the tempests of poetic despair which roar through volume after volume of philosophical poetry. A calmer mood only comes to the poet, in the midst of the very convulsions of the World War, through humble surrender to the healing forces of Nature on the beloved Tatra mountain side, in his masterpiece, *The Book of the Poor* (1916), and this enables him even on his death-bed to breathe acquiescence in a divine world-order into the enchanting melody of his last songs (*My World*).

Rugged as his peasant nature and the elemental strength of his emotions always made him in poetic expression, Kasprówicz acquired higher and wider literary culture than most of his contemporaries, and came not only to hold a University chair of Literature, but to produce a long series of inspired translations of the world's great poetry from Aeschylus and Euripides to Shakespeare and Shelley. And it was not only as a guide to these great things in the literary



heritage of humanity's past that he wielded authority over the younger generation; he had risen, in his mature poetry, above preoccupation with the earthly joys and sorrows, whether of personality or of nationality, into the realm of absolute values and eternal mysteries. It is in this highest sense that Kasproicz points the way towards the universalism worthy of a free nation.

## V

It was at Cracow in the late 'nineties of the last century that a group of young writers, jointly producing a periodical called *Life*, and soon known by the collective name of "The Young Poland", raised the flag of revolution against the literary tendencies of the preceding generations, against its would-be objective realism, its social utilitarianism, its cult of the scientific intellect. As against all this, the young proclaimed the doctrine of "Art for Art's sake"—that dominant slogan of Western European art movements in the 'nineties—and they professed to pursue, in their personal conduct as well as in their art, the one end of realizing the *Absolute*, of manifesting the "naked soul" of personality as the principal factor of all creative activity. Foremost among these young literary rebels there stood one who had drawn deep draughts of such doctrines at their sources in the Germany of Nietzsche and the Scandinavia of Ibsen: S. Przybyszewski (1868-1927), who alone of them all was to remain faithful to the tenets of his youth till the end. With inevitably monotonous persistence he continued for many years to harp, in prose poems, novels and dramas, on one and the same string of human nature—sexual passion, conceived as the most powerful and elemental manifestation of human personality. His novels and his plays have long ceased to be sensational, and are lapsing into oblivion even in this age of Freudism; but Przybyszewski's fundamental doctrine of the Absolute is now recognized to have been of historic importance as a summons for literature to return from the captivity to social services in the Positivist era to that freedom of creative self-expression.

At the time, however, when Przybyszewski and his friends proclaimed their ideal and began—somewhat wildly—to act on it, storms of controversy raged round them at once. The liberalism of middle-class democracy was beginning, everywhere in Europe, to give way to those creeds of nationalism on the one hand and of socialism on the other between which the world of our time was soon to move. In Poland, after the political resignation of decades of

"realism", the idea of national unity throughout the three severed sectors of the country had been re-awakened: a man of fiery energy and uncommon literary talent, S. Szczepanowski (1846-1900), who had spent years as a mechanical engineer in England, became the advocate of the spiritual and political reunion of the nation. In his writings, which have made him one of Poland's political classics, he developed the idea of Poland's homogeneous national physiognomy in the midst of growing national disruption. He reminded his readers of the importance of historical tradition as the foundation of all national effort; he dwelt—in an atmosphere of increasing religious indifference—on the dignity of religion as the moral mainstay of national civilization; he urged the necessities of modern social evolution in a backward community; and last but not least, he emphasized Poland's economic possibilities, which he also endeavoured—without success, alas—to promote by efforts at organizing the exploitation of the Carpathian oil-fields on a basis of national capital.

If Szczepanowski stands in Poland's political literature as the protagonist of modern nationalism in its highest and non-partisan sense, the world-wide new movement of socialism also found significant expression in Poland, both in literary theory and in organized activities. It was a highly erudite literary critic, S. Brzozowski (1878-1911) who, coming from the camp of the Polish Socialist Party, and sharing its evolution towards ideals of national independence, elaborated this Socialist doctrine into a programme for national literature in his book, *The Legend of Young Poland* (1909). As the title indicates, his attitude towards the out-and-out individualism of the literary revolutionaries of the "Young Poland" group was critical. Possessed with the Socialist enthusiasm for physical labour, he seeks in the cult of work a common spiritual denominator for the working masses of the people and the slightly despised "intellectualists"; and in the individualism of the believers in "Art for Art's sake" he is able to see merely the egotism of unproductive word-mongers; neither does he attribute any more vitality to the national message of the great Romantics themselves. Though confused and often contradictory in his ideas, he fascinated the young people of the last pre-war years by that ringing call to action which he addressed to literature on the eve of world-shaking events.

## VI

Literature as a call to national action, poetry as a criticism of social inertia and of declamatory self-delusions—such became the ultimate

message of the very greatest poet of the period, whose works now, in the light of later great events, have acquired a prophetic dignity equal to that of the national gospel of the great Romantics.

S. Wyspiański (1869-1907) grew up in the shadow of the historical and art monuments of Poland's ancient capital Cracow. Born as the son of a sculptor, and educated in the Cracow Academy of Arts, he soon amazed his contemporaries by the mighty sweep and mystic inspiration of the visions embodied in his paintings: his stained-glass windows for Cracow churches, showing old Polish kings and heroes in the majesty of death, medieval saints in the fervid glow of ecstasy or the cold splendour of self-denial, nay the Creator Himself dividing light from darkness, or Poland herself as a queen buried alive in the purple pride of her robes—all these impress the onlooker by something like Michelangesque power of conception.

But it was in the theatre of Cracow, then in the zenith of a great period of its history, that Wyspiański found his true vocation. An artist of astounding universality, a scene and costume designer of strikingly original genius, he was inspired, like Wagner before him, by an idea of the theatre as a creative fusion of several arts into one; and the series of poetic plays, which he wrote and himself staged during the few short years of his mature life, remains among the imperishable possessions of Poland's national literature.

Foremost among them in power over the audience of its day there stands his drama *The Wedding*, occasioned by the marriage of a brother poet to a peasant girl near Cracow. Writers, journalists, artists, and town ladies meet and talk with peasant men and women in a country cottage. Phantom figures from Poland's great past mingle with the living crowd, and the glories of national history are ironically contrasted with the resigned automatism of the day-to-day life of a people deprived of freedom. Out of this spiritual ferment the thought of a new armed rising is born; however, the willing peasantry get no resolute leadership from their educated fellow-citizens, and the sudden flare of enthusiasm for action dies down into a drowsy wedding dance to the sound of a fiddle played by a symbolic figure of straw—the winter covering of a rose-bush, personifying the lethargy of captivity.

The very despair of this haunting final note shook the national consciousness on the threshold of a new century out of its long torpor. And the poet added a positive sequel to his message in another play called *Deliverance*. Its hero—an actor who is playing the principal part in a mystic drama of the great Romantic poet Mickie-

wicz—boldly challenges all the half-hearted shams of current Polish life, including the misuse of the poetic heritage of Romantic poetry as a flattering unction of rhetoric laid to an inactive nation's soul. The hero, in a memorable poetic prayer, at last utters again the long-shunned watchword "a free Polish State", and, in a symbolic final scene, leads his followers to the tombs of Poland's kings in the crypt of Cracow Cathedral, to call forth new life from the abode of Death, and new history from the repository of the old. How the poet conceived the connection between great national poetry and great national action, is illustrated by another play of his entitled *The Legion*, which glorifies Mickiewicz's attempt to lead a body of Polish volunteers to help Italy in her struggle for liberty against Austria in 1848; and how the far-sighted genius of Wyspiański courageously faced even the prospect of renewed ruin and cruel sacrifice as a road to a new birth of freedom is magnificently apparent in a scenic pageant called *The November Night*, in which figures from Greek mythology mingle with the Polish insurgents of 1830 to give utterance to the terrible lesson: "All that is to live must die!"

Together with the figures of Greek gods and heroes who were the subjects of some of his earliest works, and whom he loves to introduce among modern men and women in his later ones, something of the sublime pathos of Fate in Greek tragedy enters into the fabric of his poetic visions. And whenever the fate of Poland is his theme, the old walls of his native Cracow are a background to the shapes which his imagination bodies forth, as in the play *Acropolis*, where figures from tombstones and tapestries in Cracow Castle and Cathedral are made to come to life.

In his early rhapsody of *Daniel*, Wyspiański gives symbolic expression to the resemblance in prophetic power between the authors of the Old Testament Scriptures and the great poets of Poland. An age in which poetry had indeed played a part like that of the Hebrew prophets in national history is worthily ended by Wyspiański's own works. And the new age of regained freedom which he foresaw, counts his poetry among the elements morally and spiritually vital to its making as was the leadership of Piłsudski in the military and political sphere.

## VII

Polish *painting*, like literature, had entered on a period of efflorescence under the enlightened patronage of the last king of Poland, when the partitions of the country disturbed its normal development. In the

nineteenth century, the successive phases of romanticism and realism, in the history of this as of the other arts, are closely bound up with the dramatic destinies of the nation. Thus, the achievements of the most emphatically romantic genius among modern Polish painters, A. Grottger (1837-67), are brought to culmination by the tragedy of the rising of 1863, of which his pencil, in the famous series of drawings entitled *Lithuania, Polonia, War, and Warsaw*, poetically renders all the powerful pathos and all the profound melancholy. And among those who foreshadowed the new ways of realism, P. Michałowski (1801-55), produces his sketchy but masterly little pictures, mostly of horses and battles, in the intervals of leisure allowed him by a career full of absorbing social and political interests; while another early master of modern realism, A. Gierymski (1849-1901), produced his best work in the emigrant atmosphere of Paris, of which his "Evening on the Seine" suggestively expresses the fascination.

These and others, who loom important in the technical history of Polish painting as viewed to-day, were entirely overshadowed by the greatness and popularity of one in whose work realism of manner was magnificently blended with the revived romance of national history. Poland's greatest historical painter, J. Matejko (1838-93), for many years Head of the Cracow Academy of Art, occupies the same supreme position in the record of pictorial art in his time, as Sienkiewicz does in literature. Like him, he uses a mature mastery of realistic technique for the evocation, in huge and crowded canvases, of great moments of Poland's history; and like Sienkiewicz, he indeed comforts his countrymen's hearts by the glory of these visions amid the gloom of subjection and oppression. Such masterpieces as "Skarga preaching before Sigismund III", "Reytan protesting against the first partition of Poland", "King Sigismund Augustus taking his oath on the Union of Poland and Lithuania", "King Stephen Batory receiving the homage of the Russian nobles before Pskov", "Poles and Lithuanians defeating the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald", "King Sigismund the First receiving the oath of allegiance from Prince Albert of East Prussia", "King John Sobieski sending his letter to the Pope on the rescue of Vienna", "Kościuszko on the evening of his first victory over the Russians", "King Stanislas Augustus entering Warsaw Cathedral after the passing of the reformed Constitution of 1791"—became an education in national history, and inspired the people with a new sense of dignity.

One painter only was admitted by contemporaries to approach Matejko in grandeur: H. Siemiradzki (1843-1902), whose monu-

mental picture of the martyrdom of early Christians under Nero ("Torches of Nero"), became the foundation piece of the National Museum at Cracow, while his theatrical curtain representing Tragedy, Comedy and Drama in groups of symbolical figures, also remains an ornament of that city. He may be called the Alma Tadema of Poland.

Others, highly esteemed to-day, were underrated during Matejko's hegemony. Such was J. Kossak (1824-99), who specialized in small water-colour paintings, and for that very reason was not considered the equal of masters of the "grand style". It took a brilliant effort by Poland's greatest modern art critic, S. Witkiewicz (1851-1915)—himself an eminent landscape painter, and author of a masterly study of Matejko—to gain for Kossak his position as the most perfect representative, in painting, of all the poetic charm and heroic temper of the old Poland of country gentlemen, and at the same time as a discoverer of new beauties in the observed reality of nature, especially through the treatment of his favourite subject—the horse. He has been succeeded and even surpassed in popularity by his son W. Kossak (born in 1857), now the senior and acknowledged master among Poland's painters of battle scenes.

Another revaluation established under the suggestive influence of Witkiewicz concerns the personality and work of perhaps the greatest realist among modern Polish painters, J. Chełmoński (1850-1914). As the art of Matejko corresponds to the historical novels of Sienkiewicz, so Chełmoński's countless scenes from the life of the Polish countryside correspond to the achievement of Reymont's *Peasants*. Chełmoński is the pictorial classic also of Poland's rural scenery, in the full reality of its changing aspects throughout the seasons.

Even in an art resolutely envisaging the stark realities of the countryside, romance could assert itself side by side with realism at the prompting of folklore. Fairyland creations of popular imagination associate with shapes from Greek mythology in the fantastic pictures of J. Malczewski (1855-1929), in which subtle poetic symbolism runs riot against a background of genuine Polish country scenery. This combination of realism of treatment with weird fantasticality of theme gives Malczewski a resemblance to his great contemporary Arnold Böcklin, but the suffusion of all his vision with the tragic pathos and prophetic longings of Polish patriotic feeling, as well as the intermixture of Polish folklore and classic legend in his art, makes his painting indeed a striking analogue to the dramatic poetry of his great contemporary Wyspiański.

## VIII

While thus national motives and national traditions were necessarily leaving their impress even on the technique of the nineteenth-century Polish painting, contact with the great international currents agitating Western European art was not lost. Munich and Paris play as important a part as Cracow in the education of Polish artists of the period, and towards the close of the century the influence of French impressionism swept the entire domain of Polish painting in a powerful wave of renewal of method and style. A Cracow society of painters named *Sztuka* ("Art") becomes the organ of the new movement, and, by a long series of exhibitions makes Polish painting better known to the world than it ever was before. One of the foremost exponents of the new tendencies, J. Fałat (1853-1929), succeeds Matejko as Head of the Cracow Academy of Arts, and reveals a wealth of unrecorded colour effects in his paintings of Polish landscape. He is equalled in mastery and far surpassed in range by the inexhaustible L. Wyczółkowski (1852-1937), whose innumerable works constitute the most comprehensive survey yet offered in art of all the varieties and aspects of Polish scenery, from the waters of the Baltic to the wooded Carpathian ridges, from the rocks of the Tatras to the marshes of Polesia, from the historic towers of Cracow to the primeval forest of Białowież in the north-east. And Wyczółkowski is no less universal in his technique than in his subject-matter: a great master of water-colour, he experimented in his later years in all varieties of drawing, etching and engraving, and till his end at the age of eighty-four never ceased to explore new avenues of expression.

While these are the outstanding impressionists in the domain of landscape painting, many different new developments are introduced at the same time, under Western influence, into figural painting as well. A distinguished array of portrait painters includes Poland's foremost woman painter Mlle O. Boznańska in Paris (b. 1865), whose fascinating *pointilliste* manner has earned her the title of a "portraitist of human souls". In the country itself, some of the professors of the Cracow Academy of Art, such as T. Axentowicz (b. 1859), W. Weiss (b. 1875), and F. Pautsch (b. 1877), uphold the impressionist banner of their early days.

Important new impulses were also given towards the close of the nineteenth century to the decorative application of painting in Poland. Wyspiański's surviving fellow-student, J. Mehoffer (b.

1869), after completing, in thirty-four magnificent stained-glass windows for Fribourg Cathedral, the *magnum opus* of his life, continues to exercise a dominant influence on all decorative painting in Poland.

In Poland, as elsewhere in Europe, nineteenth-century *democratic* sentiment, extending to the sphere of art, proved a particularly strong stimulant to the arts. The traditional patterns used by the peasantry of the various provinces in their domestic architecture, furniture, pottery and clothing, began to be eagerly studied by young artists towards the close of the century. S. Witkiewicz, a leading force in modern Polish art criticism, conceived the notion of erecting the "style of Zakopane", as illustrated by the carved ornaments of wooden architecture and furniture in the Tatra mountain region, into a national style for the whole of Poland. The style proved unfit for application to brick and stone architecture, and to urban furniture; but the impulse imparted bore manifold fruit both in the activities of a society formed at Cracow in 1901 for the promotion of applied art, and in the individual work of a master of sculptural wood-carving Professor J. Szczepkowski (b. 1878). In more recent times, it is especially to the hand-woven rugs of peasant design produced in many parts of Poland and known by the Oriental name of *kilims* that attention has been directed.

## IX

In Polish *music*, the romanticism of the earlier nineteenth century passed away more slowly than in literature and painting. This is due to the lasting domination of the spirit of F. Chopin (1810-49). Together with Mickiewicz the poet, Matejko the painter, and Sienkiewicz the novelist, Chopin represents in history those heights to which Polish genius rose in the domain of art during a period when national self-expression through political action was impossible.

Unlike his peers in literature and painting, Chopin as a master of nineteenth-century Polish music stands almost alone. The only great name besides his in the middle years of the century is that of S. Moniuszko (1819-72), who prolongs the era of romanticism into a later generation. Moniuszko becomes the creator of Polish national opera by such masterpieces as *Halka* (Helen) and *Straszny dwór* (The Haunted Manor). By his songs, he creates the foundations of musical culture in the modern Polish home; and by his cantatas, he gives voice to the feelings of a nation whose very poetry is being silenced by the censorship of her political oppressors. Less solitary



than the towering genius of Chopin, he was followed by disciples who continued the tradition of Romantic nationalism in music; but of these younger contemporaries only the violinist, H. Wieniawski (1835-80), won world-wide recognition, especially by his compositions based on popular dances. The world only listened again when I. J. Paderewski (born in 1860) appeared as the supreme exponent of that long-lived Romantic strain, giving the highest expression to it not only by his unique renderings of Chopin, but also by his own opera *Manru* and his well-known compositions for the piano. World-wide fame equal to Chopin's was his, long before his patriotism prompted him to reveal to his contemporaries another aspect of his greatness in the capacity of a statesman.

The foundation of the *Warsaw Philharmonic Society* in 1900 marks an epoch in Poland's modern musical history: the young composers who gathered round it form a group of innovators in musical style known by the same name, "Young Poland", as the contemporary Cracow circle of poets bears in literary history. The musicians of the new school, seeking to attain a new universalism of musical outlook after the essentially national inspiration of the musical Romantics, are eagerly learning their lessons from Wagner, Richard Strauss, Chaikovsky and Skriabin. Prominent among them, there stood the figure of M. Karłowicz (1876-1909); his symphonic poems had a promise of real greatness in them, and the charm of his songs has never ceased to appeal to cultured audiences.

## X

In the domain of *education and research*, as in the field of the arts, Polish endeavour in the nineteenth century is continually broken into by the stormy political destinies of the nation. The old Poland had had a not inglorious tradition of learning and of teaching. In the century of division and subjection, this great tradition of the past could only be followed up by fragmentary and fitful efforts. Thus, when Wielopolski was successfully winning concessions in the way of self-government for the province of Russian Poland in the 'fifties and 'sixties, the University of Warsaw (founded in 1817), flourished for a few short years, but the existence of Warsaw as a Polish University was interrupted soon after the rising of 1863, to begin again only after the deliverance of Warsaw from Russian rule in the days of the World War.

After the early eclipse of Warsaw, it was Poland's oldest University,

Cracow, which rose into renewed splendour in the later nineteenth century. Austrian rule had indeed imposed German instead of Polish as the language of teaching upon this as well as upon the sister University of Lwów for a short time; but with the grant of provincial self-government to Austrian Poland in 1867 a new period of revival came, and Cracow in particular, once more a Polish University, became the chief seat of academic learning in Polish lands. The old University and the new "Academy"—a learned society established in 1870 side by side with the University as the chief Polish organ for the publication of research work—attracted scholarly and scientific talent from all parts of the divided country. Cracow became a great intellectual rallying centre and thereby a stronghold of national tradition. Poland's history was now thoroughly studied with the help of modern methods of critical research, and with a view to throwing light on the painful enigma of the nation's tragic fate in recent times. Monumental histories of Poland were written at Cracow by J. Szujski (1835-83) and M. Bobrzyński (1849-1936), and the latter became the acknowledged head of the "Cracow school of historians", which saw in the political faults and shortcomings of the old Poland the principal cause of her downfall. National literature also was investigated at Cracow largely as a source of lessons for national thought and conduct. It was mainly from this point of view that Count S. Tarnowski (1837-1917), for many years Professor of Polish Literature in the University and in his later life President of the Academy, gave a comprehensive large-scale presentation of Poland's literary history. At Cracow also, amid the richest collection of old manuscripts and early printed books in Poland, the University Librarian, K. Estreicher (1827-1908), began to compile a complete and voluminous bibliography of all the printed publications of Poland.

The fine tradition of classical studies for which Cracow had been famous in the early centuries of its history was now revived by such eminent scholars as K. Morawski (1852-1925), Professor of Roman Literature, and Father S. Pawlicki (1839-1916), a brilliant historian of Greek philosophy. This atmosphere of creative effort and comprehensive generalizations inspired the great German scholar, W. Creizenach (1851-1919), who taught German literature at Cracow for thirty years, to undertake the huge task of writing a history of European drama from the middle ages onward, four-fifths of which were completed before the War.

Side by side with the study of literature, the science of comparative linguistics in its modern form found worthy representatives at

Cracow. One of them, J. H. Rozwadowski (1867-1935), distinguished also as a philosophical thinker, created a school of linguistic research which, under K. Nitsch (b. 1874), has done epoch-making work in the investigation of Polish dialects.

In the sciences Cracow, in the later nineteenth century, produced research work of great importance. It was in their modestly equipped Cracow laboratories that two scientists of genius, Wróblewski (1845-88) and Olszewski (1846-1915), succeeded in liquefying air in the 'eighties; and their achievements have since been worthily followed up by men like Smoluchowski (1872-1917), a pioneer of modern atomic theory, and W. Natanson (1864-1937), who, besides winning an international reputation as a mathematical physicist, made a name in literature as one of the masters of Polish scientific prose. In the biological sciences, M. Raciborski (1863-1917) introduced a new spirit into all branches of botanical research, and the plant physiologist, E. Godlewski (1847-1930), became the founder of a Faculty of Agriculture in the University, and afterwards the organizer of the Agricultural Research Institute at Puławy in the new Poland. Medicine is illustrated by such names as the physiologist J. Majer (1808-89), the first President of the Academy; the pathologist J. Dietl (1804-78); and N. Cybulski (1854-1919), whose method of registering the action of the heart found world-wide acceptance.

Over and above such achievements, it must not pass unmentioned that the tasks of legislation and administration in the self-governing Austrian Poland often claimed the services of Cracow's men of learning in the arena of public life. For instance, the distinguished economist, J. Dunajewski (1822-95), became one of the ablest modern Finance Ministers of the Austrian Empire; and the historian M. Bobrzyński, during a memorable period, administered Austrian Poland as Governor of the province.

Other seats of learning in Poland were not inactive at the time. Even in Warsaw, where the Polish University had been replaced by a Russian one, and Polish research workers were obliged to make a living by teaching in private schools, the achievement of Tarnowski at Cracow was paralleled by the work of a literary historian of widely different views, the Positivist, P. Chmielowski (1848-1904). It was in conscious opposition to the historical pessimism of the "Cracow school" that Warsaw historians, T. Korzon (1839-1918) and W. Smoleński (1851-1926), did justice, in elaborate works, to the constructive achievements of the old Polish State. Opposition to Cracow's historical doctrines marked equally important work in the only re-

maintaining other Polish University, Lwów in Austrian Poland, where L. Kubala (1838-1918) provided the material for Sienkiewicz's historical novels by his accounts of the wars of the seventeenth century, and O. Balzer (1858-1933) authoritatively established a new valuation of the old Poland's constitutional structure. It was, finally, during many years of teaching at Lwów University that one of modern Poland's most brilliant historical writers, S. Askenazy (1867-1935), laid a new foundation for the study of post-partition Polish history. In the sciences also Lwów competed successfully with the achievements of Cracow. B. Dybowski (1833-1930) turned his political exile to Siberia to good account by exploring the fauna of that vast sub-continent, and afterwards taught zoology for many years at Lwów.

It was part of Poland's tragedy that at this period much Polish learning and talent was scattered over the globe in the service of foreign communities. A fellow-student of Mickiewicz at Wilno, the mineralogist I. Domeyko (1801-89), organized the University of Santiago de Chile. Russia for many years counted among her own glories in Classical scholarship the brilliant figure of Professor T. Zieliński (b. 1859), who later became Professor of Classics at Warsaw in the new Poland. At St Petersburg, Professor L. Petrażycki (1867-1931) did a large part of his original work on the evolution and philosophical nature of law. It was in Russian Universities also that J. Baudouin de Courtenay (1845-1930), one of the creators of modern comparative linguistics, spent many years of his career. A Pole, Professor A. Brückner (1856-1939), for forty years held the chair of Slavonic at Berlin. For France, a Polish geographer and botanist, J. Dybowski (1855-1929), did important exploring work in North Africa; and it was there that the great Mme Curie (*née* Skłodowska, 1867-1935), made her scientific discoveries. In England, W. Lutosławski (b. 1863), first became famous by his work on Plato, and B. Malinowski (b. 1884) even now occupies a chair in the London School of Economics.

## II. IN THE NEW POLAND

### I

The gulf between conditions before and after the Great War, huge as it is all the world over, was bound to be greater in Poland than elsewhere: the restoration of political independence meant not only a complete revolution in the entire outward situation of the people—

legal, social, economic and otherwise—but also a thorough change in outlook and consequently in ideas and views, especially as between the older and the younger generation. On literature and art, in particular, the new state of things necessarily had a most decisive influence. In the century of Poland's captivity, the word of the poets and writers, during memorable periods, had been the supreme manifestation of the nation's continued existence, and literature, accordingly, had ever since been surrounded in the eyes of the Pole with the glory and dignity of a great national institution. And the same glory and dignity had become an attribute of Polish music and painting through the works of Chopin and of Matejko. Now, after the World War, when the normal means of national self-assertion in the form of the entire political machinery of State life became re-established, literature and art could no longer retain the unique and dominant position they had held in the era of political eclipse, but would have to occupy the more limited place which is theirs by right among the many different domains of creative effort in the national civilization of a free people. This diminution of the national prestige and authority of art—which had, indeed, been partly prefigured by the more sober views taken of the function of literature in the decades of realism after 1863—would, however, now be balanced by the regained freedom from exclusive preoccupation with national problems. Art, in a free country, could devote its attention to those social issues which are part of a world-wide post-war situation, and to philosophical themes of universal appeal; it could also take a fuller and more active share in international movements and developments concerning form, technique and style rather than idea and subject-matter.

For a connected history of literature and art in post-war Poland the time is not yet ripe. As elsewhere, there is a deep-felt lack of unity of inspiration and expression; the age has not evolved either recognized leading ideas or a characteristic style; universal ferment both in substance and in form is produced by the decay or overthrow of all authorities, standards, and principles of the former age. That disillusionment which the grey dawn of post-war life brought with it after the hectic and artificial expectations of war-time still reigns. In Poland the reality of regained freedom proved very different from those visions of the Promised Land which were the comfort of captivity; and the grave responsibilities of independent existence, with the consciousness of manifold errors committed in the first years of the new freedom, weighed down imaginative flight. Above all, the variety of day-to-day interests in the working life of a free com-

munity was no equivalent for that sustaining idea of deliverance which had filled all minds and given scope to all creative powers, in the era of subjection. The common daylight of normal political life seemed to reveal no objects sufficiently great or mysterious to be a source of powerful inspiration.

## II

As if to indicate the end of a period in Poland's literary annals, the war-time and early post-war years were marked by the death of some of the leading writers of the last pre-war era. Sienkiewicz, who did not live to see the restoration of Polish independence, was followed by Reymont, Żeromski, Kasproicz and Przybyszewski before ten years were over. On the other hand, some writers who had risen into the beginnings of fame in the last years before the war, now attained the maturity of their art. Foremost among them in universal estimation, there stands, in the field of the novel, the figure of W. Berent (b. 1873). Of his pre-war novels, one had been inspired by the Positivist doctrines of intellectual democracy, another by the aestheticism of the 'nineties, and a third by vague hopes of national re-birth out of social ferment. It was on the threshold of new post-war life that Berent enriched Polish literature by a work of high art in the novel entitled *Living Stones* which presents, with poetic rapture of realization, those forces of elemental human vitality at the core of medieval civilization that were to find full expression in the Renaissance.

It was after those early post-war years over which Berent's masterpiece shone, that a woman writer who had made a name by several novels of contemporary life, Mme Z. Nałkowska (b. 1885), reached the height of her powers in *The Border Line* (*Granica*): a somewhat sordid story of a servant girl's criminal revenge for seduction is here lifted into the region of highest art by penetrating psychological insight and deep human power of sympathy. The genius of Mme Z. Kossak (b. 1890, of the family which gave two great painters to Poland), was hammered into maturity by the fateful blows of war-time events; in her autobiographical story *Blaze* (which has been translated into English) she gives a powerful account of the revolutionary destruction wrought in the cultured old homes of the country gentry of Poland's eastern border by the wave of Bolshevism which swept that region in 1918. Mme Kossak's talent has since expressed itself in a huge prose epic entitled *The Crusaders*, one of the signs of a coming revival of historical fiction after years of entire absorption in the turbid stream of contemporary developments.

The history of a recent social evolution is also the atmosphere of the large-scale masterpiece of the third leading Polish woman novelist of to-day. Mme M. Dąbrowska (b. 1892), herself a daughter of a "county family", had charmed her readers by short stories from the life of the manor and of the labourer's cottage before her six-volume chronicle of *Nights and Days* became a *Forsyte Saga* of that social life-centre of old Poland's rural civilization—the country house.

Autobiography enters largely into Mme Dąbrowska's visions of latter-day social development; it is the very life-breath of the early stories of her eminent colleague J. Kaden-Bandrowski (b. 1885), *The City of my Mother* (meaning Cracow) and *In the Shadow of the Forgotten Bush*. His gloomy epic of the coal-mining district adjacent to Silesia, entitled *Black Wings*, is symptomatic of a new form of literature, generally known as *reportage* in Continental European literature; it has almost a closer affinity to journalism than to fiction, and is distinguished by a strong background of actual reality, including the figures of prominent contemporary men and women, as well as by a suffusion of autobiography. It is this autobiographical element, with the delightful humour of memories of boyhood, which predominates in the popular work of the brilliant essayist K. Makuszyński (b. 1884). It is rather the element of objective observation of social conditions, with the pathos of proletarian misery for its dominant note, which marks the works of J. Wiktor, himself a child of the slums (b. 1890), or the books of that curious couple of authors, H. Boguszevska and J. Kornacki, such as their literary discovery of the home life of bargemen on the Vistula (*Life of the River*).

### III

In works of the sort just described, the setting seems to matter almost more than the human figures in it. The loving attention to the background of landscape, of custom, of provincial or professional peculiarities is indeed one of the most characteristic outgrowths of the great realist movement in all modern literature, and it has manifested itself, everywhere in Europe, by a profusion of "regional novels" during the last six or seven decades. Poland has a classic of the life of her eastern border provinces from the pen of Miss M. Rodziewicz (b. 1863), who for fifty years has not ceased to glorify the borderlands. The northern section of that border has been depicted by J. Weyssenhoff (1860-1932), who, in such novels as *The Sable and the Girl*, attained something like the mastery of Mickiewicz's great

epic in describing field and forest and lake of the Lithuanian countryside. A corner of the south-west, beloved by all Poland, has been particularly productive of literary inspiration; the Tatra mountains on the Slovak border, with the handsome and fiery race of their freedom-loving inhabitants, are an ever-recurrent theme of modern Polish literature, both in verse and prose; K. Przerwa Tetmajer (b. 1865), one of the foremost lyrists of "Young Poland", uses the mountaineers' dialect for prose renderings of the "Robin Hood" legends about the glorified eighteenth-century mountain bandit Janosik; while W. Orkan (1876-1930), himself a child of the mountainside, presents the reality of life in the mountain villages, but also the primeval ferocity of passions which agitate human beings amid rocks and torrents and avalanches. Among other parts of Poland, the province of Silesia, re-united to the mother country after nearly six hundred years of separation, has found her own novelist in the person of a country schoolmaster, G. Morcinek (b. 1891), who has chosen the hard and heroic life of the coal-miners for his literary province.

The political destinies of the nation in the century of its struggles for liberty had made wanderers of many of Poland's best sons; it is not to be wondered at then that, side by side with "regional" inspiration, *exoticism* should become a marked strain in modern Polish letters. Poland gave her greatest genius in that field, Joseph Conrad, to England and English literature; but she possesses in W. Sieroszewski (b. 1858), President of the Polish Academy of Literature, a writer of no mean order on the obscure life of those indigenous tribes of the Far North-east of Asia, among which he spent many years of exile. War-time experiences of exile and captivity have produced new and widely read works of that kind from the pen of F. A. Ossendowski (b. 1876), whose autobiographical stories from the Mongolian borderlands (such as *Beasts, Men, and Gods*), enjoyed great popularity in English translations.

Neither the exotic nor the provincial novel, however, seems to represent most characteristically the dominant literary tendencies of our time. These find expression rather in the presentation of certain definite social surroundings, particularly of slum life in large cities. Thus Mme Eva Szelburg-Zarembina (b. 1899) has lately risen into fame by her story of a proletarian woman's life entitled *The Progress of Joanna*, which, in some of its features, is not undeserving of comparison with Hardy's *Tess*, and is being continued in the popular international fashion of the *roman-fleuve*, so as to form a sort of chronicle of working-class life in Russian Poland in the revolutionary



period after 1905. Something similar is attempted, with brilliant success, in P. Gojawiczyńska's long family novel of 1935, *The Girls of Nowolipki* (a mean suburb of Warsaw), and here, as in the former case, every shred of the romantic political illusions of pre-war Polish national thought is remorselessly removed from the picture of stark economic and social realities.

If social *milieu* is an essential preoccupation of the younger novelists, it is sometimes intimate personal experience which makes for profound study of background in a narrow sphere. Thus, it is certainly not among contributions to social history, but rather among literary masterpieces of individual psychology that we must classify such great novels as M. Choromański's hospital romance *Jealousy and Medicine* (1932), or Mme Kuncewicz's *The Foreign Woman* (1936).

#### IV

In the field of *poetry*, it might well have been expected that the revival of romantic inspirations in the last pre-war years, after the extreme soberness of the age of realism, would be checked by the grim realities of war and of post-war distress. But the generation emerging from the war contained many young talents whose poetic impulse was only intensified by the mighty events of the time, and whom the new freedom prompted to seek "fresh woods and pastures new" in the vast domain of poetic form. One pre-war master of exquisite lyrical rhythms, L. Staff (b. 1878), has survived to become a model of formal elegance to younger poets, to organize a great school of translators of which he is the head and master, and occasionally to reach something like the depth and power of Kasproicz in the religious musings of his later years. A new group of young poets was consolidated in Warsaw even during the war, and a monthly review entitled *Scamander* became the repository of their production, whilst their critical weekly, the *Wiadomości literackie* (*Literary News*), became the most widely read organ of literary criticism in the new Poland. The young poets were united chiefly by aspirations towards a high level of formal literary culture; some of them also share views of a radical type on social problems. Foremost among them stands J. Tuwim (b. 1894), the most gifted lyrist of the new Poland. His masterly command of diction and rhythm is manifested also in excellent translations from the Russian of Pushkin and others. His fellow-poet, K. Wierzyński (b. 1894), leapt into international fame with his *Olympian Laurels*, a collection of modern poetry devoted entirely to the glorification of

feats of sport, and he has since struck a deep note of reflection in his new volume *Tragic Freedom*. Less productive than these, B. Leśmian (1878-1937) and J. Lechoń (b. 1899) are chiefly distinguished by high excellence of lyrical form. Grace of form is also the principal quality of the epigrammatic work of Mme Kossak-Pawlikowska (b. 1899), who, however, has lately given expression to a melancholy thoughtfulness, especially in her dramas, such as the social and philosophical allegory of *The Ants* (1936). The other outstanding poetess of post-war Poland, Mlle I. K. Iłakowicz (b. 1892), is mainly known for the almost mystical exaltation of her love for the beauty of forest and field in her native Lithuanian borderlands, and for the simple expression of her penetrating insight into such human mysteries as the soul of the child. She is in the *Scamander* group, but not of it. Outside that group, circles and personalities of poets have since the war risen into prominence at Poznań, Cracow, and in the foothills of Poland's border-mountains in the south. The folklore and piety of the mountain-side peasantry have given nourishment to the lyrical vein of Emil Żegadłowicz (b. 1888) and a group of his disciples.

In *drama*, on the other hand, the output is both less extensive and less important, as indeed it is throughout the world in these days of the victorious competition of the film and the wireless with the attractions of the traditional dramatic theatre. In the sphere of poetic drama, there was a successor to Wyspiański in the person of K. H. Rostworowski (1877-1938), who followed up the successes of his earlier plays *Judas Iscariot* and *Caligula* by giving us, in *The Surprise* (1929), a powerful drama of the countryside. His junior contemporary, J. Szaniawski (b. 1887), is a master of subtle dialogue. In comedy, a new vein has recently been opened up by A. Cwojdzński, who has made use of the achievements of modern science as subjects of brilliant satirical comedies. The equally brilliant but much more eccentric serious dramas and satirical comedies of St. J. Witkiewicz, junior (b. 1885), will probably meet with due appreciation only in days to come.

Mention may also be made of such outstanding *critics* as the somewhat abstract and theoretical K. Irzykowski (b. 1873), to whom we are indebted, among other things, for the first book in Polish on the aesthetics of the film (*The Tenth Muse*), and the brilliantly witty Dr T. Żeleński (pen name "Boy", b. 1873), who, besides innumerable critical essays and some excellent satirical verse, has produced masterly Polish translations of great French writers.

## V

In the sphere of the *plastic arts*, the lack of a dominant style expressive of the spirit of our age is particularly marked. The rise of the country from the wreckage of war gave new opportunities to monumental *architecture*; but its achievements, as we see them in the streets of the new Warsaw, for instance, oscillate between the extremes of a revived classicism and an imitation of the bare and strictly geometrical structures characteristic of Western European building in our day. Links with domestic tradition were strengthened by the preservation of numerous architectural monuments, such as the ancient Royal Castle at Cracow, which now has regained all the magnificence of its Renaissance forms. At Warsaw, many of the fine baroque and rococo palaces in the city have been restored and are now occupied by the Ministerial departments of the Polish Government.

In post-war Polish *painting*, we note the same discrepancy of contradictory tendencies as in architecture. Thus, there are, on the one hand, organized attempts to resuscitate the manner of fourteenth-century Italians—as in the school of the eminent if rigidly sculptural portrait painter L. Ślondziński (b. 1889) at Wilno—or of the Italian and the Dutch painters of the later Renaissance and the Baroque Age, as in the school composed of the disciples of the distinguished realist in portrait painting, T. Pruszkowski (b. 1888), in Warsaw, and calling itself “the Brotherhood of St Luke”. On the other hand, modern currents, such as cubism and formism, reach Poland from the West and continue to be cultivated by young painters.

Outstanding personalities are to be met with in post-war Polish painting and sculpture chiefly in the field of *decorative art*. The master of the modern wood-cut, W. Skoczylas (d. 1932), particularly expressive in his drawings of the sinewy figures of Polish mountaineers; the gifted woman painter Z. Stryjeńska (b. 1894), whose presentation of Polish national dances and folklore scenes reveals a vivid temperament and a rich vein of humour; the scene painters W. Drabik (d. 1933) in Warsaw and K. Frycz (b. 1877) in Cracow, are especially worth mentioning. In *sculpture*, modern Poland, besides the classical traditionalist K. Laszczka (b. 1865), and the more elemental K. Hukan, possesses a leading personality in K. Dunikowski (b. 1876),

In *music*, it was from among the musical modernists gathered round the Warsaw Philharmonic in the early years of the twentieth century that an even more advanced and revolutionary group detached itself,

to become the new Poland's musical "Left Wing" under the leadership of K. Szymanowski (1883-1937), who rapidly rose into fame during and after the War. He reached greatest simplicity in the sphere of song composition, with helpful inspiration from the folk melodies of the Polish mountain peasantry, to which Szymanowski does homage in his *Mazurkas*. Similar influences operate in his last great composition, the ballet called "The Highland Lads" (*Harnasie*). While manifesting, in this way, a return towards those perennial folk-song sources of national inspiration on which Chopin had drawn, Szymanowski retained to the end the peculiar mark of being the most emphatically intellectual among Polish composers. Szymanowski's importance soon outgrew the status of a mere leader of the musical Left of Poland. He was buried in 1937, not merely as the recognized master of the whole younger generation of Poland's musicians, but as acknowledged, in the unanimous opinion of the musical world at large, to have been the greatest Polish composer since Chopin.

## VI

The tasks by which the new Poland found itself confronted in the sphere of *education*, were gigantic indeed. As related above, some headway had been made in the era of self-government in Austrian Poland with rebuilding the fabric of national education; thus had now to be extended, after re-union, to the vast spaces of the other sectors of the country, particularly to the sadly neglected areas of former Russian Poland, while the teaching personnel which could be mustered at the moment was obviously insufficient, and the economic resources of the new State were as obviously inadequate to cope with the demand for new school buildings and school equipment. The demand for education of all grades had enormously increased with the stride forward in democratic development which was made by the very creation of the new Polish Republic; and it was intensified by the high birthrate of Poland's country population, adding a net balance of half a million a year to the number of inhabitants of the new State. And besides the provision of school teaching for ever-new crowds of children, there were huge masses of adult country illiterates to be dealt with, especially in the Russian sector. In addition, the irony of historical fate would have it that Poland had regained her freedom when, in the field of education as well as in other fields, all the traditional standards of value and of method were shaken, and universal ferment and uncertainty prevailed.

In the circumstances, it reflects high credit on the administrative organizers and the devoted teaching staff of the new Polish educational system that within a few short years an almost 100 per cent attendance of children of school age at elementary schools had been attained, a network of nearly one thousand secondary schools was in existence, and twelve institutions of University rank were ministering to the needs of an army of 50,000 students (of which number one-third are women). The economic depression after 1929 naturally had an unfavourable effect on conditions in this as in other domains, and the intellectual and social evils of overcrowding, especially in institutions of higher learning, did not fail, as in other countries, to become apparent. With all this, the educational effort of the early years of the restored Republic will no doubt loom no less large in historical perspective than her military effort in the year 1920.

In the technical organization of education an effort was made to democratize the school system in accordance with the democratic changes in political structure. The sphere of the elementary school has now been extended by several years. This, under the peculiar conditions of Poland, had, however, the disadvantages of making large district schools necessary and thereby depriving children in small villages of school teaching within easy reach of their homes, and of curtailing secondary education in favour of the enlarged elementary school system.

In University education, Poland has endeavoured to modify a system modelled too exclusively on the German Universities, and to come nearer to the Western European and American type of University organization. Thus, the degree of "doctor" (formerly the only one) has been raised above a new degree of "master" which, in most cases, carries with it admission to practice in one of the professions. In accordance with this, the system of examinations for the master's degree has been normalized and distributed over the entire academic curriculum. The system so created, while better adapted to the requirements of mass education and of strictly professional training, has deprived the Universities of the opportunities which the larger freedom of former days gave to scholarly and scientific pursuits on the part of the more gifted students. Later some measure of return to the old tradition of "academic freedom" became necessary, particularly in the field of research, and such a return was accordingly accomplished by a series of amendments to the University Reform Bill in 1937.

While different aims and points of view were thus struggling for

supremacy in Poland's University policy, the Universities and learned societies were doing their best, in spite of burdensome teaching duties and sadly limited material means, to collaborate in the world's work of research. The creative achievements which had been made possible at Cracow and Lwów Universities before the War, were not only continued in their original homes, but followed up by the new developments in revived centres of research. Cracow became the *Alma Mater* no longer merely of numbers of individual students, but of whole universities as well. Her disciples provided much of the teaching staff of the reborn or newly established Universities of Warsaw, Wilno and Poznań. And it was Warsaw, once more the capital of Poland, that created new homes for manifold research activities in her several academic schools, as well as her old and new learned societies and her institutes for organized investigation. It was in the capital that, ten years after the restoration of independence, the State created a "National Culture Fund" as a permanent source of subsidies for the promotion of creative effort in scholarship, science and art.

Among the most distinguished instances of individual and collective research work, conducted in the academic centres of the new Poland, we may note that of the school of mathematical logic in Warsaw, with Professor J. Łukasiewicz (b. 1878) at its head; the work of the great school of pure mathematics in the same city under Professor W. Sierpiński (b. 1882); the achievements of the Poznań school of sociology headed by Professor F. Znaniecki (b. 1882), well known in English-speaking countries through his books on the Polish Peasant in America and on Social Action; the school of political economy at Cracow, presided over by Poland's foremost economist A. Krzyżanowski (b. 1873); and the school of geography and map-making, ably conducted by Professor E. Romer (b. 1871) at Lwów. The Polish Academy at Cracow remains, as it was before the War, the principal organization for monumental publications in the field of learning; and such recent large-scale enterprises as the systematic *Polish Encyclopaedia* (begun before the War), the *Polish Dictionary of National Biography* (appearing since 1935), and several series of studies on all aspects of Polish Silesia enjoy support in all parts of the country. Cracow also remains the chief home of studies in Polish history. Recent years have also seen such vast undertakings as the racial study of Poland's population by the Lwów anthropologist J. Czekanowski (b. 1882), the monumental record of *The Civilization of the Slavs* by Professor K. Moszyński of Wilno (b. 1887), a large *History of Manners*

in Poland, by Professor J. St. Bystron (b. 1892), or, in another field, the comprehensive atlas of Poland's Flora by Professor W. Szafer of Cracow (b. 1886). In the field of international co-operation in research, Polish effort is well attested not merely by the numerous papers read by Polish authors at international congresses, but also by such evidence as the organization of an international *Corpus philosophorum medii aevi* under the general editorship of the Cracow philosophical historian Father K. Michalski (b. 1883).

To return, in conclusion, to those political problems of Poland with which the present History is especially concerned, the great services must not pass unmentioned which Poland's men of learning have rendered to the State as such in its renewed life. The collaboration of the eminent legal historian St. Kutrzeba (b. 1876) and the geologist W. Goetel (b. 1889), in the framing of Poland's international treaties; the organizing work on the codification of Polish law done by Professor F. Zoll (b. 1865) and other academic experts in law; the administrative services of Professor K. Bartel (b. 1882) as Prime Minister; of Professor W. Świątosławski (b. 1881, a distinguished chemical physicist), as Minister of Education; and, above all, of Professor I. Mościcki (b. 1867, a pioneer in industrial chemistry), as President of the Republic since 1926—give eloquent testimony of the willingness of Poland's men of learning to place their best energies in the service of the reborn State.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE FIRST YEARS OF THE REPUBLIC

#### THE NEW POLAND

WHEN the German armies retreated from Poland at the end of 1918, they left the country in a deplorable condition. Large areas, particularly in the south and south-west, had been the actual battle-ground of the opposing armies; and the devastation caused by the Russian army in its retreat early in the War, and subsequently by the German army of occupation, had been far greater even than that of the fighting itself. Moreover, the blockade of the Allies had borne hardly upon the occupied Polish provinces; the shortage of supplies of all kinds had weakened the population, especially in the towns, and disease was rampant. All over the country, factory equipment had been removed to Germany—often for the mere value of the metal; sometimes, too, in pursuance of a deliberate policy of destroying Polish industry. For all this there was no possibility of adequate redress. The fruits of Polish industry in the past sixty years appeared to have been destroyed; economic life, at any rate so far as manufacturing industry was concerned, would have to start again almost from the beginning.

No problem was more urgent than that of transport. The condition of the railways at the close of 1918 was grave in the extreme. There were three separate systems not designed to support each other. Rolling-stock had been destroyed in great quantities during the War. What was left was so entirely inadequate, that if an immediate remedy were not found the population would be faced with starvation. Permanent way was damaged, and necessary equipment destroyed. In the retreats in the early part of the War, a large number of railway bridges had been blown up, and the damage had either not been repaired at all, or the repairs had been only temporary. The roads were out of repair, and there was at the same time no government organization capable of exercising adequate central control. Without these facilities there seemed little hope of giving the country a breathing-space in which the urgent economic and social problems could be solved. Moreover, the machinery of government was largely lacking, and its creation became one of the major necessities of the hour. Yet this task had to be conducted alongside of efforts to deal with problems so acute as to tax the most highly developed administration,

It was of importance, however, that for two years prior to the Armistice a Polish government had been carried on in Warsaw. It is true that that government had been under German suzerainty, and that its powers were greatly limited. Its activities, moreover, had not been continuous. But since October 1917, the Regency Council had taken effective charge of certain departments, and had begun work of real importance which bore fruit when once the independent Republic had been re-established. The Departments of Education and Justice had been organized and their functions developed. In the field of finance the Polish National Loan Bank had been carrying out functions both as regards the issue of currency and the exercise of certain other powers of a central banking institution in an independent State. The Polish National Loan Bank continued in fact to act as the Bank of Issue in Poland for another five and a half years down to 1924.

There existed also a personal link between the government which was established after the restoration of independence and the régime which preceded it. Pilsudski had been in power for a few months as one of the Council of State in 1917. Much of the time between his resignation and the Armistice had been spent in prison; he emerged in November 1918 and returned to Warsaw, and it was to him that the country turned in the crisis. He was fifty-one years old at this time, and at the height of his powers. The fame of his exploits and those of his *légionnaires* during the War gave him an outstanding position in Poland. His commanding personal appearance and strength of body, as well as of mind and will, added to the deep impression he made on his countrymen.

On 14 November 1918 the Regency Council resigned, giving full powers to Pilsudski. Eight days later a decree was issued declaring that he had assumed the supreme power as temporary Head of the State until the summons of a Legislative Diet. "I assume," he said, "as temporary Head of the State, supreme power in the Republic of Poland." A Council was to be set up, the members of which were to be nominated by him and were to be responsible to him. Its laws were to be subject to his confirmation; they had also to be laid before the first session of the Legislative Diet. Moraczewski, Pilsudski's first Prime Minister, was nominated on 18 November. The Government had, however, no intention of remaining in power unconstitutionally, and it lost no time in issuing an electoral decree which laid down in preparation for the Diet that voting should be equal for all, to be exercised by both sexes by secret ballot and with proportional representation.

For the time being Congress Poland and parts of Galicia alone were

under the control of the government in Warsaw. In December Poznań freed itself from those of the Germans who remained, and the frontier was pushed back to the western edge of the old province of Poznań, approximately where it ran until 1939. Fighting with the remnants of the German forces continued, however, until the middle of February 1919, and was then concluded by an armistice which left the former provinces of Poznań and Western Prussia in the hands of the Poles. At the same time preparations were rapidly going forward for the Peace Conference in Paris, and it became clear that the task of setting forth Poland's claims in detail was to be one of immense importance and responsibility.

It was at this moment that Paderewski appeared in Poland. His reappearance was dramatic. Though during the War he had been strenuously advancing the cause of Polish independence in America and elsewhere, it was still as the musician of the age that the world knew him. Unlike Pilsudski, he had worked during the War in closest touch with those Poles who looked to the Allies for their country's salvation. On his journey from America he had discussed with the leaders of the Polish National Committee the situation then existing, and had reached a large measure of agreement with them. Now, in Warsaw, he met Pilsudski. Their meetings accordingly brought together not only two outstanding Polish personalities, but the two main wings of the Polish Independence Movement. The result was an understanding, completed when Paderewski in the middle of January 1919 took office as Prime Minister. Paderewski himself also took the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and among the names of those forming the Government were several which were to have a leading place in the work of the next few years. It was a cabinet broadly representative of the principal parties, and less conspicuously influenced by the Left than its predecessor, the Moraczewski cabinet. Paderewski directed his attention primarily to the preparation for the work of the Peace Conference. He, with Dmowski, were nominated the Polish delegates. Dmowski was already in Paris, and it was he who, on 29 January 1919, opened Poland's case before the Supreme Council. The *de jure* recognition of the independence of the Polish State was accorded by the principal Allied Powers immediately after this; first, by the United States of America on 30 January, and by the other Powers on various dates in February. This was a speedy triumph for the union which Pilsudski and Paderewski had formed.

It was while these great events were taking place that the first general election to the Polish Diet was held. At first the election was

confined to the Congress Kingdom and to parts of Galicia, but former members of the Austrian and German Diets were included. Representatives were appointed for Upper Silesia. The Diet on 20 February unanimously confirmed Pilsudski's position as Head of the State, and voted its confidence in him. At the same time it asserted that sovereign and legislative power resided in the Diet. Thus the division of powers at this early stage as between the Diet and the Head of the State was vague. The Head of the State was to nominate the Government on the basis of an understanding with the Diet; and both he and the Government were declared to be responsible to the Diet for the exercise of their office. Several of the political parties, later so well known, now made their appearance, and their influence was to be seen in these declarations of 20 February 1919, afterwards named the "Little Constitution".

The Diet was in no sense disposed to rest content with these general principles, and detailed proposals for a constitutional law were prepared for its consideration. It was a period of constitution-making throughout Europe. The times were electric; extreme democratic movements were ploughing their way through the political and social fabric of Central Europe. On the east, Communist Russia was not only holding its own against its enemies, but threatening to undermine the structure of neighbouring states. In Poland, on the other hand, national feelings, pent up for a century and a half, rejoiced in the recovery of freedom and independence. A nation-wide zest for reconstruction inspired the country. These strong national forces held the Polish State together during the critical early months of 1919.

In May 1919 the draft of a constitutional law was laid before the Diet by Wojciechowski, the Minister of the Interior. The draft contained a series of declarations which well represented the feelings of all parties at the time. The first article asserted the intention of the Republic to maintain its independence and integrity, and at the same time its desire to co-operate with other powers. The Republic desired especially to renew links with neighbouring peoples "in the spirit both of the age of the Jagiellons and of modern democratic conceptions". The influence of Wojciechowski, himself a Socialist who had spent many years before the War in England, was to be seen not less than that of Pilsudski in the declaration of rights which followed. It was indeed an epitome of that for which the country had longed in the century and a half of partition.

Equal rights of citizenship for all, the inviolability of person and of home, freedom of belief, secrecy of correspondence, liberty of speech,

of the press, of meeting, and of associations were among the principles established. The Diet was declared to represent the sovereignty of the nation. The principles of the suffrage were again laid down. Not only was the Diet to be endowed with legislative functions, but it was to have the right to make its views felt as regards the composition of governments. Executive power was to be the function of the Head of the State, who was also to be elected directly by universal suffrage. His power was to be limited, however, by a body called the Guardians of the Laws. Compulsory military service at the age of twenty was to be declared. Other articles provided for a progressive tax on wealth, and stressed the state's responsibility to exercise a special care for the workers "who are the principal factor in the general well-being".

In the autumn Paderewski tabled a further draft following the main lines of the earlier one. The Guardians of the Laws were to be chosen half by the Diet and half by the Chief of State. The powers of the Diet were further increased by a veto on legislation. Controversy turned on the position of the Guardians of the Laws, an institution subsequently transformed into the Senate. After long debates in which party feelings became more and more pronounced, the Constitution was finally passed on 17 March 1921. It was not to come into full operation until the following year. An elected President would then take the place of the Head of the State, and the first constituent Diet would give way to a legislature of two chambers elected in accordance with the Constitution.

Meanwhile, much had taken place both as regards external and internal affairs. In spite of the many disappointments suffered by Polish patriotic feeling at the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the Diet promptly ratified the Treaty at the end of July 1919. For Poland it was a document of fundamental importance, enshrining as it did the outward and legal basis of the renewed independence of the country. It had been a triumph for Paderewski. On the conclusion of the treaty it was necessary for him as Prime Minister to give greater attention to internal affairs. It was thus that he intervened in November in the constitutional question; but he failed to secure support from the conflicting parties in the Diet, and on 9 December 1919 he resigned. His great work had been the representation of Poland's case to the Powers, both before and during the Peace Conference. His successful co-operation with Pilsudski at a critical moment had effectively united all parties in Poland, and enabled the Republic to take its place once again in world affairs.

For the next six months the general character of the Government was maintained, though with Paderewski no longer at its head there was some loss of prestige. Pilsudski's influence increased, and attention became more and more concentrated upon foreign affairs, and above all on the eastern frontier. On the west definite progress was reported in the winter of 1920, when the administration of Polish Pomerania was finally taken over from Germany. This relatively peaceful fulfilment of the Treaty of Versailles contrasted with events on the eastern side, which had their climax in Pilsudski's offensive against Kiev in April and May. The rapid sequence of events which followed is described elsewhere. It will suffice to say that for a time the very existence of the Republic seemed threatened. In August Polish victories outside Warsaw, and subsequently on the Niemen and the Szczara, wrought the salvation of the country and re-established Polish military prestige. Meanwhile, however, the crisis had had its effect elsewhere. The Polish representatives at the Conference at Spa in August found themselves in a difficult position. Opinion in Western Europe was divided over Pilsudski's enterprise against Soviet Russia. Great Britain clearly regarded it with disapproval. Nevertheless, the Conference decided to send the Allied Missions to Warsaw and they remained there during the anxious days which followed.

It was unfortunate for Poland that just at this time a number of important frontier questions came up for decision. The plebiscites in Allenstein and Marienwerder, and an important stage in the dispute between Poland and Czechoslovakia over the Cieszyn (Teschen) question, occurred at the height of the struggle with Soviet Russia, and the decisions reflected the difficult position in which Poland found itself. Difficulties over the Danzig settlement as laid down in the Peace Treaty were also experienced. The Polish-Danzig Convention was, however, signed in November after the armistice with Soviet Russia. Paderewski represented Poland both in the Cieszyn and the Danzig negotiations, but even his influence failed to remove the shadow cast by the Russian war upon his country's claims.

The support of France was Poland's greatest diplomatic asset in the dark days of 1920. Early in 1921 this support ripened into a Treaty of Alliance. The essential part of this treaty, the Political Agreement, was signed in February 1921, but not ratified until 27 June 1922. After referring to the existing treaty arrangements in Europe and to the Covenant of the League of Nations, it provided that:

If notwithstanding the sincere pacific views and intentions of the two contracting States, either or both of them should be attacked without

giving provocation, the two Governments shall take concerted measures for the defence of their territory and the protection of their legitimate interests within the limits specified in the preamble.

The signature of this treaty was followed by a treaty with Rumania signed in March 1921, and immediately afterwards by the conclusion of peace with Soviet Russia. By the Treaty of Riga the eastern boundary of Poland, though excluding a large part of Polish territory held prior to the First and Second Partitions, was fixed well to the east of the so-called Curzon line proposed at the Peace Conference at Paris. The Treaty of Riga, following closely on the treaties with France and Rumania, did much to restore the prestige of the Republic jeopardized by the events of the preceding summer. In the following month, April 1921, a further step in the regularization of Polish external affairs was effected by the Transit Convention concluded with Germany and the Free City of Danzig. This Convention, which came into force in the following year, provided for communications of all kinds between Germany and East Prussia through Polish and Danzig territory. It was followed by a more complete treaty between Poland and the Free City, in October 1921. This was of the utmost importance to the life both of Danzig and Poland. It provided in detail for the relations between the two States which necessarily were of the greatest importance to the life of each. Thereafter, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, Poland undertook the foreign interests of Danzig.

In the latter part of 1921, Poland's foreign policy was dominated by the Upper Silesian question. The settlement of the future of this territory was already a matter of urgent necessity. Two Polish outbreaks in the years 1919 and 1920 had shown something of the violent spirit which the disposal of the area was likely to arouse. A plebiscite was taken on 20 March 1921, and controversy raged thereafter on the divisibility of the Industrial Triangle within the area. After two references to the Council of the League of Nations in August and October, the Industrial Triangle was divided, with provision for a Convention between Germany and Poland designed to maintain the economic life of the region. This decision was made known at the end of October. Its acceptance by Poland and, after protest, by Germany was followed by detailed negotiations between the two countries under the presidency of Calonder, a former Swiss President. These negotiations bore fruit in May 1922, in the German-Polish Convention for the administration of Upper Silesia.



## THE EXECUTIVE AND THE DIET

The succession of important events in the realm of foreign affairs had afforded the main interest in Polish political life for the three years from 1919 to 1922, and had a wide influence on internal politics. In the first half of 1920, Skulski and Grabski successively held the premiership in the cabinet from which Paderewski had resigned; but Pilsudski remained the dominant influence in the Government. In the middle of the crisis of the Russian invasion, a change was considered necessary, and a cabinet was formed more widely representative of all parties, with Witos as President. Witos, the leader of the Polish Peasant Party, the largest of the peasant groups in the Diet, was a politician of experience who had been a member of the Austrian Diet. Though not well known outside Poland and the old Austrian Empire, he was held in high regard among a very large part of his countrymen. He displayed even in his appearance and dress the Polish peasant type; tall and powerful of body, he possessed, also, a cautious wisdom and firmness of purpose which moved unswervingly towards his end in view.

Several of the ministers who had previously served remained and Grabski returned to the Department of Finance. The Socialist leader Daszyński became Vice-President of the Council, and Sapieha, a representative of the Right, Minister of Foreign Affairs. A kind of national government was thus formed which held power through the anxious year. In June 1921 an important change took place when Skirmunt succeeded Sapieha at the Foreign Office. Skirmunt's patient diplomacy had much to do with the successful outcome of the series of difficult negotiations, already described, which helped to restore Polish prestige and to secure a peaceful settlement of many frontier questions. Skirmunt established formal diplomatic relations with Moscow and arranged with skill many matters of detail arising out of the Treaty of Riga with Soviet Russia.

But the Government was less successful in its efforts to handle internal problems, and above all to arrest deterioration of the financial situation. The difficulty of maintaining a consistent policy in matters of home administration while keeping a majority in the Diet was already proving too great for successive Polish cabinets. When Witos resigned, he was succeeded as President of the Council of Ministers by Ponikowski. Skirmunt continued at the Foreign Office, whilst an energetic Finance Minister was found in Michalski. Ponikowski was Rector of the Warsaw Polytechnic, and Michalski a Professor of the

University at Lwów. The Government tended to become a cabinet of experts, professors and officials taking the place of the party leaders who had previously occupied ministerial posts.

This fluctuation between governments in which a strong official element existed and those under more strictly party influences was a feature of political life in the first decade of the new Republic. Pilsudski had not yet identified himself with either principle of government. His sympathies still lay with the Left, and on that account he was not altogether at ease with a cabinet which, though without strong party affiliations, seemed constantly to support the views of the Right. Michalski's strenuous economies in public expenditure themselves presented a difficulty in so far as they affected the requirements of the army. But the growing need for financial reform placed the Government in a strong position in this respect. Nevertheless the future remained uncertain.

Apart from finance, the most urgent question which the Government had to meet was that of the future of Wilno. This ancient Polish city in the north-east was situated in an area which contained some Lithuanian and larger White Russian elements. In February a separate Wilno Diet was summoned by the Polish authorities, who had established themselves there after Żeligowski's *coup* in 1920. This Diet insisted upon union with Poland, and the situation was somewhat embarrassing to the cabinet and especially to Skirmunt, who was striving to emphasize the moderate character of Polish policy on frontier questions. The feeling in Poland itself as well as in Wilno was unmistakable. Practically speaking, there could be no solution but the union of the city with the rest of the country. Nevertheless, the situation was such that the cabinet felt bound to resign in March, though it was at once reconstituted on practically the same basis. Meanwhile, Skirmunt did something to strengthen diplomatic links with surrounding countries by inviting a Baltic Conference to meet at Warsaw in March. Lithuania, estranged over the Wilno question, was not represented; but the States of the Eastern Baltic, except Russia, attended, and the Conference reached agreement on a number of points. This Convention, though avoiding the Wilno problem, strengthened Polish influence in the Baltic, and prepared the way for the formal incorporation of Wilno in April 1922.

Shortly afterwards there took place the International Conference at Genoa, but it did little towards solving the economic difficulties of the time. From the Polish point of view the event of outstanding importance during the sittings of the Conference was the Treaty of

Rapallo between Germany and Soviet Russia. No combination could have been more dangerous to Polish security and interests than one in which a resentful Germany, suspicious of the Western Powers, turned for support to an alliance with Communist Moscow. The atmosphere created by this treaty did not render any easier the negotiations at Geneva for the Convention which was to govern the administration of Upper Silesia for the next ten years. After much patient negotiation, however, the Convention was signed on 15 May 1922. Its successful operation during the years which followed was a tribute both to the care of those who brought the Convention about, and to the patience of those who operated it.

The Ponikowski cabinet was from many points of view the most successful government of the early years of the Polish Republic; but it had never established full community of view with Pilsudski. Misunderstandings reached a critical stage in June 1922, and the Government threatened to resign. Pilsudski promptly accepted this proposal; and in such circumstances that the acceptance was interpreted as a dismissal of the cabinet. There was considerable indignation among the parties of the Right against Pilsudski, and for nearly two months the crisis continued. But the voting in the Diet showed that the Marshal still enjoyed wide support, and eventually the choice of a new cabinet was left to him. In the conflict the Right had claimed to stand for constitutional principles and for the responsibility of the cabinet to the Diet. Pilsudski relied mainly on his personal position with the army and with the people generally, but claimed also to stand for a strong central executive in some degree independent of parliamentary parties.

The government which followed under Professor Nowak sought in the main to pursue the same policy as its predecessor, but it had less authority, as the first elections under the new constitution were impending at the end of the year. The elections again sent numerous parties to the Diet; but they showed a tendency to unite in blocks, of which the most formidable was that of the Right, with more than a third of the seats, and that of the national minorities, representatives of the German, Ruthenian, Jewish and other parties, which thanks to proportional representation obtained nearly one-fifth of the seats. The success of the minorities rather sharpened the nationalistic attitude of the Right. The first task of the new Diet and Senate was the election of the President of the Republic under the 1921 Constitution. Narutowicz, a close friend of Pilsudski and a member of the Nowak and several earlier governments, was successful. He had been strongly

supported by the representatives of the national minorities, and bitterly opposed by the parties of the Right. His success was short-lived and tragic, for at a public function two days after his formal installation he was murdered by a fanatical party extremist. This event accentuated and embittered the controversy between Pilsudski's adherents and the Right. It seemed likely to have also a deeper significance. Was not the country returning to the state of division and weakness which had contributed so largely to its downfall a century and a half before? Such was the fear aroused throughout Poland, and the action of the murderer was indignantly repudiated.

Wojciechowski, also a member of the Left, was at once elected in the place of Narutowicz. The cabinet was badly shaken, and a number of ministerial changes took place. Sikorski<sup>1</sup> became President of the Council, whilst a new figure came to the Foreign Office, Count Skrzyński, a minister who, like Skirmunt, was to have a considerable influence in the next few years. This Government early achieved an important success when at the Ambassadors' Conference, in March 1923, international recognition was accorded to the eastern frontier of Poland as it then existed *de facto*. Thus, not only was the boundary between Poland and Soviet Russia maintained in accordance with the Treaty of Riga, but Polish sovereignty in Eastern Galicia and in the Wilno territory was also recognized. Political stability had, however, yet to come. A rearrangement of the parties soon overthrew the Government, and placed in power under Witos a combination of the Peasant Party and the Right.

The change was a great blow for Pilsudski and convinced him of the impossibility of co-operating with the Diet parties as then constituted. He went into retirement, resigning both from the army and political life. His position under the new constitution had for the previous six months been remarkable. He had surrendered his position as Head of the State when Narutowicz became President. He held no ministerial post. As Inspector-General of the army he was constitutionally the servant of the Government, though in fact he had dominated it. His régime was thus unconstitutional; it was justified only by his personal standing and popularity. But though his cabinets had succeeded in a marked degree in diplomatic matters, they had failed to deal satisfactorily with financial problems, and these had now become so acute as to threaten the very foundation of the country's economic life. This failure gave force to the claims of his enemies, and more than any other factor brought about his retirement in May 1923. For the moment it seemed that the Marshal's public career had ended.

<sup>1</sup> In 1940 Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army.

## THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

In the first five years of the new republic few things proved more important than the building up of the new Polish administration. The influence of the executive increased through all the changes of government. At first administrative life took much of its character from the former Austrian public service. Poles who had served in official posts in Vienna or Galicia came to Warsaw and occupied many important posts. Gradually this became modified; the situation of official headquarters in Warsaw and the existence there of certain departments organized under the German occupation brought in many Poles who had had experience in industry, commerce, or social work in Congress Poland. The incorporation of the Prussian Provinces brought in a Western Polish element. Would the different training and outlook of these newly-recruited officials prevent a unified administration? By 1923 it may be said that, so far as the central departments of government were concerned, the development of a national public service was assured.

In the first days of the new republic, new Ministries of Commerce, Agriculture, Labour, Health, Communications, Posts, Food and Public Works were set up. The Ministry of War was largely Pilsudski's own creation. The department of the Treasury or Finance was furnished from the start with officials of experience from the Austrian régime. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruited not only Poles who had served in the diplomatic services of the three Empires, but many volunteers who were to render distinguished services in the next few years. Education, to which in the days of partition many patriotic Poles had devoted themselves, found active support in the inner circles of the government. The universities were soon filled to overflowing, and quickly became centres of national feeling. They were able to draw upon the services of many Polish professors from abroad; love of learning and educational zeal proved to be a powerful influence carried over from the days of partition.

Socialist teaching had played a part in the independence movements, particularly prior to the war in Russian Poland, and also influenced the administration which came together early in 1919. Pilsudski himself was regarded as a member of the Left. The activities of the departments of Health, Labour and later of Land Reform drew something of their inspiration from this source. In the course of time a combination took place, and a unified public administration began to show itself. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of this process in its influence on Polish life.

The attitude of successive governments towards labour and social administration was of great political importance. The violent political forces which tore Central and Eastern Europe immediately after the War were in Poland matters of constant concern. Communist Russia was ready to seize on any opportunity of gaining a foothold. The national character of the new state in fact proved superior to any competing principle. But from the outset Poland gave marked attention to labour legislation, and to the grave social problems which resulted from the War. The departments of Labour and Food Supply were at an early stage united under one head, and by December 1918 an attack was begun on the problem of unemployment and rebuilding. Registration of unemployed workers was commenced, and arrangements made for their assignment to the huge task of reconstruction.

The department of Food Supply carried out during the first two winters a widespread rationing scheme in the towns, receiving assistance from the supplies sent by the United States of America. Labour legislation in 1919 also gave formal legal standing to Trade Unions. An eight-hour day was established by law only a few days after the Armistice. In 1920 legislation set on a permanent basis the activities of the employment bureaux. The protection of the workers' health and safety in employment was the subject of legislation commencing in 1919. Schemes of insurance covering sickness, accident and old age followed in the same year. The deterioration of financial conditions brought a new problem, that of constantly regulating wages to conform to the increase in the cost of living, and a statistical department studied variations in prices and enabled the Minister of Labour to adjust wages.

Another social force which influenced the earlier years of the republic was the movement for Land Reform. This arose from the intense subdivision of peasant properties in parts of Poland, as in many other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, with roots far back in the social history of the Slav countries. Small peasant properties were most numerous in Galicia; least so in Prussian Poland. The Government in the first five years of the republic sought to meet the demand for more peasant land by distributing areas from old Crown lands or from certain large estates acquired in the break-up of the three partitioning Empires.

As early as July 1919 the Diet called for agrarian reform. It sought to limit the area held by any person to a maximum of one hundred hectares, or four hundred hectares in the eastern borderlands. A formal statute, the first Agrarian Reform Law, was passed in July

1920, embodying the principles of the previous resolution. The consequences, if it had been strictly enforced, would have been revolutionary. Actually, the work proceeded very slowly. The peasants were well-organized politically, though divided in the Diet into two main groups. When Witos, the leader of the larger, came into power in 1923 a new department was set up to hasten the application of the law; but the financial crisis followed, and it was left to the Grabski Government to prepare amending legislation modifying the first law. This Act, the second Agrarian Reform Law, was passed in December 1925, shortly after Grabski had resigned. It carried out the policy of gradually meeting the more acute needs out of the state lands without recourse to general expropriation. It became the basis on which this difficult problem was for some years to be handled.

#### THE PROBLEM OF FINANCIAL REFORM

From the first years of the restored republic, financial questions had been prominent. In few departments of government was disorganization so marked. There was no single financial administration for the whole country; the systems of tax collection were not unified; there was not even a common currency unit throughout the whole country. Though the department of the Treasury or of Finance was one of the first to be organized, Poland long struggled against this initial weakness. The urgent need for government expenditure on defence and economic reconstruction led to a neglect at the outset of elementary financial principles, and successive governments found themselves adopting the fatally easy path of inflation.

In January 1920, the Polish mark issued by the Polish National Loan Bank became the sole legal tender. The war with Soviet Russia that year largely offset the efforts made towards financial reorganization, and it was not until the autumn of 1921 that Ponikowski's cabinet seriously attempted financial reform. Michalski, the Finance Minister, proposed a far-reaching programme which he carried out with great energy. On the one hand he took strong steps to reduce expenditure in every department of government, not excluding the army itself; on the other hand he sought to increase substantially the revenue of the state by a simple tax upon capital. This tax, the *danina* or levy, was raised in addition to other forms of taxation and was intended in the course of twelve months to cover the gap between expenditure and revenue. A measure of confidence was restored to which the successful foreign policy of the Government and the gradual solution of frontier problems contributed, and for a time the depreciation of the currency

was checked. But the constitutional crisis and resignation of the Government in the summer of 1922 was a serious blow, and though Jastrzębski attempted to pursue the policy of his predecessor, confidence could not be restored and the Polish mark lost value rapidly. The murder of President Narutowicz and a series of rapid cabinet changes further weakened the position, and by the middle of 1923 financial collapse seemed imminent. The cost of living was rising as the value of the mark fell, and brought financial problems to the very front rank among political questions.

In almost every country of Central and Eastern Europe somewhat similar conditions existed at this time, and the whole structure of social and economic life was once again threatened. The alarming collapse of the German mark influenced the movements of neighbouring currencies, and accelerated the fall of the Polish mark. In 1923 an International Commission with an American chairman, General Dawes, went to Germany and drew up plans for the rehabilitation of the finances. For a brief period the hopes thus aroused brought about a temporary improvement; but at the end of the year a fresh depreciation took place, and the Polish mark as well as the German mark sank in value to points at which they ceased to fulfil their functions as practical money units. In the autumn of 1923, the Polish Government invited a British financial authority, Commander Hilton Young (Lord Kennet), to visit Poland and advise them. He had little difficulty in pointing to the fundamental cause of the financial weakness; the expenditure of the state had constantly been in excess of its resources. He advised drastic economies, the increase of taxation, and improvements in revenue collection. The Coalition Government under Witos, supported by the Peasant Party and the Right, seemed, however, little likely to put this advice into force. The country was filled with dissatisfaction; a widespread strike broke out in November, and shortly afterwards the Government resigned.

It was at this critical point that Ladislas Grabski again became President of the Council of Ministers, combining this post with that of Minister of Finance which he had also held previously. Grabski had held the premiership for a short time in the critical days of 1920. He was a man of great energy and determination with the high courage needed to meet a crisis. He possessed, too, the ability to put into practice the principles he thought necessary for the country's salvation.

The situation was so critical as to justify measures of a very sweeping character. Grabski went at once to the Diet and obtained the grant of plenary powers in financial matters. He adopted the proposals



already made for financial reform, and pushed them through with energy. In addition, he freely used the gold reserves of the country to stabilize the exchanges temporarily until the effect of his other measures could be felt. In this policy he was successful. Stabilization was thus effected in Poland contemporaneously with the recovery in Germany following upon the acceptance of the Dawes Plan. Polish public opinion was elated with this initial success, and Grabski was encouraged to establish, in March 1924, a new Central Bank, the Bank of Poland, in place of the Polish National Loan Bank which had served since the German occupation. This measure was popular. The name of the new bank suggested an historical link with the Bank of Poland, established at the time of the Congress Kingdom one hundred years before. Grabski also introduced a new currency unit, the *złoty*, to replace the mark. The mark had always been associated with the German war-time occupation, and national sentiment had long demanded its replacement. The *złoty*, as conceived by Grabski, was to be equal to the Swiss gold franc. This rate of exchange, as subsequent events showed, was fixed on too high a level for the country's economic system to bear it. The British financial adviser raised his voice in warning; but Grabski held to his course, and for the remainder of 1924 and part of 1925 his boldness seemed to be justified.

The year 1924 was one in which notable efforts towards international appeasement were being made in Europe, following the success of the Dawes Plan in Germany. Hopes were widely entertained that the League of Nations, supported more actively than heretofore by the Western Powers, would establish a lasting settlement, and though these anticipations ultimately proved to be unduly sanguine, they received a temporary fulfilment in a period of improved international relations which led up to the Treaty of Locarno in 1925. Grabski's financial reforms were favoured by the improved political conditions abroad. The Bank of Poland opened its doors for business on 20 April 1924, and in the course of the following month two more State banking institutions were set up. These, the Bank of National Economy and the State Agrarian Bank, were designed to assist manufacturing industry and agriculture respectively.

The rigid economy in public expenditure to secure budget equilibrium had a deflationary effect upon industry. Grabski sought to combat this with a liberal loan policy through the medium of these special banks. In this again he was for a time successful. A loan raised by Poland in Italy in 1924 was of assistance and moreover indicated increased confidence abroad in Polish economic recovery. By the

summer of 1924 Grabski seemed to have triumphed not only as a financial reformer, but as the political leader of the country. Skrzyński, who became Foreign Minister in July, was successful at the League of Nations Assembly in securing better terms for Poland on the minorities question, and there even seemed to be a hope of better relations with Germany. Signs of trouble reappeared, however, at the end of the year when the Diet cavilled at Grabski's proposal that his plenary financial powers should be renewed for another year. Once again it was a struggle between the parties of the Diet claiming their constitutional rights and the Prime Minister standing for the special powers required by the executive in a time of crisis. To some extent Grabski's earlier success was his undoing. The Diet insisted that the time had passed when plenary powers could be justified, and refused to grant an extension. The procedure provided under the constitution as regards financial matters was to be maintained unimpaired.

The Government was accordingly faced with a difficult situation. The policy of financial restriction then being pursued almost throughout Europe bore very hardly on industry. Polish industry felt its full weight, Unemployment had increased, and productivity seemed to have receded. In 1925 the Government again began to find it difficult to maintain budget equilibrium. At the same time it was necessary for it to keep its influence with the Diet to pass remedial measures. A struggle took place over the budget for 1925, but Grabski's influence was still enough to obtain its passage. His Government had for some time been working on plans for alleviating the position of the national minorities in Poland, with considerable success. Laws establishing the use of minority languages in Ruthenian, White Russian, and Lithuanian districts had won approval. A little later an important agreement was made with the Jewish community in Poland. Nevertheless, the economic strain was very great, and in June 1925 a blow was received which ended the period of comparative stability.

In that month there came to an end the arrangement under the Upper Silesian Convention by which for three years German manufacturing concerns had freely imported coal from the mines of Polish Upper Silesia. Hostility to Poland in Berlin, despite various efforts to improve relations, was still strong and the colliery owners in the Rhineland were able to induce the German Government to prohibit further importations of Polish coal. Thus commenced the so-called economic war between the two countries, which lasted more or less until the advent of the National-Socialist régime in Germany, and

wrought great loss to both. Although the colliery interests in Upper Silesia, after a rapid reorganization, secured new markets in other quarters, the momentary economic effect was grave. Grabski was in budget difficulties, and he requested the Bank of Poland in July to make a special loan to meet the temporary crisis. The Bank of Poland, as it was entitled to do, refused, the exchange rate of the zloty began to fall, and Grabski resigned.

Though the immediate occasion of his resignation was a dispute with his own creation, the Bank of Poland, his failure was primarily due to the constitutional position. Grabski, a professor like Poniowski before him, had achieved a considerable measure of success as head of a government which largely stood outside party influence and party control. Thus once more it was a case in which a cabinet largely composed of experts and with a considerable reputation in the country had failed to obtain sufficient support from the Diet to enable it to deal with the practical problems of government.

#### THE TREATY OF LOCARNO

The period of Grabski's tenure of office witnessed many important events in the sphere of foreign policy. The efforts of the Western Powers in 1924 and 1925 for the pacification of Europe were reflected in a number of less spectacular agreements elsewhere affecting certain special regions. Conferences among the Baltic States took place at Warsaw in 1924, and in Helsingfors (Helsinki) in 1925. The Polish Government participated in these, and a Treaty of Reconciliation and Arbitration between all the Baltic countries except Lithuania was ultimately signed. In 1925, after Skrzyński had become Foreign Minister, such a treaty was signed with Czechoslovakia. The close understanding of both Governments with the French prepared the way for the participation of Poland and Czechoslovakia in the Treaty of Locarno later in the year. Events were moving towards a great effort for European pacification. In Great Britain interest lay chiefly in stabilizing the western frontier of Germany. France was anxious to look further afield, and the Governments of Poland and Czechoslovakia enlisted French aid for the question of Germany's eastern frontiers.

The desirability of a better understanding with Germany was constantly in view in Skrzyński's policy, and negotiations with her were set in motion for concluding a commercial treaty. These negotiations broke down, unfortunately, on the question of German optants in Poland; which the German Government proposed to include in the negotiations. No agreement was reached. As a result, Germany

refused to renew the arrangement by which coal was imported free of duty from Polish Upper Silesia. The economic and financial effects of this breakdown have been recorded already. With the breaking off of negotiations for a commercial treaty between the two countries came the breakdown of hopes for a better political understanding.

In spite of this grave hindrance to German-Polish relations, there was outwardly a long step forward when in October Skrzyński signed the Treaty of Locarno. The inclusion of Poland in the treaty was undoubtedly a triumph both for the French point of view and for Skrzyński. But it was also a notable extension eastward in Europe of the treaty system designed to put an end to the rivalries which had lain at the root of the Great War. The treaty provided for the peaceful settlement of disputes regarding the Polish-German frontier, though the Powers guaranteeing the frontier between Germany and France did not extend their guarantees to Germany's frontier on the east. The position of France in the event of Poland being attacked by Germany would even under the treaty not be an easy one. But the interpretation placed upon the terms by the French and Polish Governments was that France by going to the assistance of the Poles, after the latter had been attacked by Germany, would not commit thereby an act of aggression against Germany so as to bring the Guarantor Powers into the field in Germany's aid. France by the terms of the treaty guaranteed the Polish frontier with Germany; but it was still open to Germany to attempt to secure its revision by peaceful means.

The Treaty of Locarno was followed by the entry of Germany into the League of Nations. The precise terms on which this important event was to take place were the subject of long negotiations. Germany insisted that she should have a permanent seat on the Council of the League, and this led to the assertion of a similar right on behalf of Poland. In 1926, after Grabski had resigned and Skrzyński had succeeded him as President of the Council of Ministers, the Government formally put forward this claim. At the first attempt, in March 1926, the Locarno powers failed to agree among themselves as to the terms on which Germany would enter the League. This objective was, however, reached in September. Poland then received a non-permanent seat, but was declared to be re-eligible at the end of the three-year period. She thus acquired a more assured place in the diplomatic counsels of Europe and of the world. But Skrzyński achieved no further success in his efforts to establish closer relations with Germany. In April 1926 a Soviet-German treaty largely re-

affirmed that of Rapallo in 1922, and it became clear that Polish foreign policy was as yet a long way from its goal of securing a settlement with its powerful neighbours. Nevertheless, Skrzyński's work at the Foreign Office had been of permanent value. Poland had by progressive stages reached a position of greater influence than she had attained at any time since the days of Sobieski.

#### THE RETURN OF PILSUDSKI

The resignation of Grabski, in November 1925, brought back into the field once again a government depending on the support of the Diet. After some days of uncertainty, Skrzyński took over the task of forming a government. He sought to form a combination of a wide group of parties. For the time being he had adequate support, and his personal prestige, at its height after the Treaty of Locarno, seemed to ensure him a substantial term in power.

The Grabski Government had achieved many successes in home and in foreign affairs; but unfortunately its prime task, the stabilization of the finances, was left very incomplete. The collapse of the new złoty currency, introduced with such enthusiasm in the spring of 1924, caused depression within the country and a lack of confidence abroad. Much depended therefore on Skrzyński's choice of a finance minister; he selected Zdziechowski, a member of the Right, who had a considerable reputation in the Diet. But Zdziechowski could only promise a reduction in public expenditure, mainly by scaling down the salaries in the public service. Moreover, he was compelled, by the growth of industrial unemployment and distress, to spend large sums on relief works. Grabski had some time before this invited Professor Kemmerer, an American financial expert with much experience in drafting central banking laws and in currency restoration, to examine the position in Poland, and the professor's report indicated good hopes of financial revival. When, however, Zdziechowski produced his draft budget in January 1926, the fact that it could only be balanced by issues of treasury notes and silver coin was speedily noted, and the złoty began to move downward afresh.

Skrzyński, in his endeavour to bring together in his cabinet representatives of all parties, had secured the appointment of Żeligowski as Minister of War. Żeligowski had a considerable reputation from the war with Soviet Russia, and had also been a close associate of Pilsudski. He had, however, to face at once the desire of the majority of the Government supporters to reorganize the higher command in the army, largely eliminating the supporters of Pilsudski. From his

retirement Pilsudski wrote strongly opposing this, and his opposition was enthusiastically supported in the army itself. The ministers felt that they could not proceed with the plan in view of the feelings aroused, and it was dropped for the time. It was evident that Pilsudski in his retirement was still a power in the land.

This difficulty was hardly over before the financial situation compelled further action. A struggle broke out between the Left and Right wings of the Government supporters in the Diet, both making proposals as to the measures to be adopted. The coalition could not be maintained and the Government, finding that it could not keep the support of the Socialists, resigned. Skrzyński's resignation brought into power another cabinet depending on the Diet, but relying more definitely on the Right, with Witos as President of the Council of Ministers. Witos still led the largest of the peasant parties which held a middle position in the Diet, but his union with the parties of the Right made it clear that the new Government would still be influenced by animosity to Pilsudski. The maintenance of Zdziechowski as Finance Minister and of an officer considered to be an opponent of Pilsudski as Minister of War was not popular outside the Diet.

On 11 May Pilsudski felt it was his hour to strike, and to end the party struggles, which in his view and in that of a large part of the country were the cause of its troubles. He emerged from his retirement and published an article attacking the new Government. Rumours were soon afloat of armed attacks on the Marshal by Government partisans, and these caused strong demonstrations of feelings in the army and among the populace. On the following day a few troops openly rallied to Pilsudski's defence. He placed himself at their head and marched into Warsaw. Fighting broke out at once in the streets and continued until 14 May. It was confined to the city of Warsaw, though the whole country watched the crisis with the most intense interest and concern. Both the Government and Pilsudski were reinforced during the struggle. Socialist influence and the workers generally were on the side of Pilsudski, and the army in the main was for him. His adherents gained strength rapidly, and by 14 May he had triumphed. The Government fled to the outskirts of Warsaw, where together with President Wojciechowski they resigned.

Pilsudski at once formed a cabinet under the presidency of an old friend, Casimir Bartel. It was composed of personal supporters, officials and experts, and represented a return to a government independent of the Diet. The new cabinet found wide support throughout most of the country, including Warsaw itself; but in the provinces

of former Prussian Poland the Right had great influence. Fortunately the forces of union prevailed, and when a National Assembly was summoned for the end of the month, all parts of the country were represented. The Assembly met on 31 May. It elected Pilsudski President of the Republic by 292 votes to 193. Pilsudski declined the Presidency, however, and on the following day the Assembly elected Mościcki, a close friend of Pilsudski and a well-known scientist and industrialist, who had been for some time a professor at the University of Lwów, and had very ably managed the great chemical factory of Chorzów in Polish Silesia. Pilsudski, who had once again taken charge of the Ministry of War when the Bartel cabinet took office, remained at that department. His first act was to terminate the dispute as to the higher command, reversing the decision which the Witos Government had taken shortly before.

With the return of Pilsudski to power, the parties of the Diet largely lost their influence. A government of experts with Pilsudski as the dominating figure now ruled, and the history of the Polish Republic entered upon a fresh stage. Everything depended on how the country would accept this new arrangement of powers; whether, contrary to what Pilsudski claimed, the parties of the Diet held the nation's confidence. The answer to that question must be sought in the history of the ensuing years, particularly those which intervened between 1926 and the death of the Marshal nine years later. In fact the country soon recovered confidence and gave the new Government its support; almost immediately recovery took place in the financial situation and a period of economic revival and renewed prosperity commenced. It was not long also before opinion abroad, though shocked at first by the suddenness and violence of the change, accepted the altered régime as a guarantee of future stability. .

## CHAPTER XXV

### PILSUDSKI

**I**N the years 1925 and 1926, the minds of men in Poland were in a state of profound disquiet. The formation of a coalition government by Skrzyński had raised high hopes. The combination in its chief of radical principles with aristocratic traditions seemed to promise closer co-operation between parties in solving the problem how to find a government that would work. The hopes had been disappointed. This government too would not work. The struggle for stability, political and economic, was still foiled by faction. Poland had once been destroyed by its inability to find an effective form of government. Men began to fear that it might be so destroyed again.

The reborn state needed for its continued existence safety abroad and economic stability at home, and party government in the Sejm had given it neither. Before the partition, Polish politicians had been distinguished by their capacity for obstruction. The men who after the restoration came as representatives to the Sejm reproduced the characteristic, intensified by their early training as conspirators against the partition powers. They were unused to responsibility and successful only in criticism, and from year to year the nation saw the work known to be needful for national stability postponed to the enchanting preoccupations of party strife and political intrigue.

The failure of her rulers to increase the security of Poland on the international scene was apparent. To rely for ever on the French alliance alone, and to accept as a permanent condition the hostility of Russia and Germany, were little better than counsels of despair. Sooner or later France must be preoccupied, and Poland find herself alone with her powerful neighbours. Yet with Russia in 1925 Poland was as bad friends as ever, and with Germany relations, strained by a quarrel about optants in 1925 and further inflamed by one about liquidation of properties in 1926, had if possible got worse. The dangers of the situation were exposed by a general treaty between Russia and Germany (24 April 1926). Poland's enemies were now for a time at least at one, and they were near. Her friends were far away.

The failure of the parties and the Sejm to promote economic stability was even more conspicuous. In 1926 the memory of the



downfall of the currency in 1922-3 was still vivid. The whole life of the nation, economic and domestic, had then been paralysed by the depreciation of the polmark. Peasants and industrialists had been unable to sell their produce; wholesale and retail trade had all but ceased; and the wage-earners had been unemployed. Interest and rents could not be paid; capital values had vanished like smoke; and the thrifty had been deprived of their savings. The Treasury had been empty, and the State insolvent. Rich and poor had known the great misery that comes with a ruined currency, and had learned to fear it as the worst of evils.

From the report of the British Financial Mission in 1924 instructed public opinion had learned that the cause of these evils was inflation, and that the chief thing needed to prevent them was a budget balanced by economy in expenditure. It had learned what ought to be done; and it saw that it was not done. Grabski's Government had effected much but not enough. Expenditure had not been kept below revenue. Grabski had made the mistake of establishing his new currency before his budget was balanced. There was a well-meant struggle to make both ends meet, but it failed, and inflation began again.

His successor, Skrzyński, struggled in vain with the inheritance of an unsound financial position. Expenditure still exceeded revenue, and a factious Sejm resisted economy. Small notes and coins were manufactured to cover the deficit, an expedient which is the most elusive and dangerous of all forms of inflation. The exchange value of the złoty began to fall sharply, and rising prices and wages began once more to follow a vicious circle in pursuit of an unattainable equilibrium. The conditions of the chaos of 1923 seemed about to be reproduced, and the nation was in dread of a repetition of its evils. By May 1926 the złoty, the exchange value of which was supposed to be about five to the American dollar, had fallen to eleven to the dollar. To save the situation Skrzyński and Zdziechowski, his Finance Minister, under the influence of their socialist supporters, could only propose fresh taxation. No one believed that remedy adequate to the disorder. The Government fell, and all that could be found to take its place was another combination of the discredited party-system. On 10 May 1926 Witos became for the third time Prime Minister. The change did nothing to relieve the fears of the nation. In its alarm it turned to the one force in Polish politics which had not been discredited by the failures of the preceding five years.

Of Joseph Pilsudski much has been told in previous chapters; but

in order to understand the course of events at this crisis we must remind ourselves of the character of the man who for the next nine years was himself to be the history of Poland.

He was born in 1867 in a country house at Zulów in Lithuania. His father was well-to-do, with the chivalrous and romantic traditions of an aristocrat and the fervent devotion to nationality of an inhabitant of the old Kingdom of Poland. Joseph's childhood was spent in dark and evil days. The failure of the January revolution of 1863 had been followed by the cruel persecutions of Muraviev. The child was too young to suffer at the time: "I could not share", he wrote, "the grief which darkened my father's brow and filled my mother's eyes with tears": but his participation in the wrongs of his race was not long delayed. In due course he was sent to a Russianized school at Wilno, and learned the wretched lot to which a Polish boy was born. He was persecuted for his race, and at once resistance to oppression became for him the only thing in life. "In such conditions", he wrote, "my hatred for the Tsardom and Russian oppression grew year by year. Sometimes my helplessness overwhelmed me, and shame at having to hear contemptuous words about Poland made my cheeks burn." It was then the common lot of Polish boys. There can have been few but resolved, as he did, to fling themselves against the oppressor. They knew that, save by a miracle, they could not succeed; they did not know that to one of them destiny had given the gifts which work miracles.

He fed the fires of mental revolt with the literature of the French revolution and the era of Napoleon, and with the socialist propaganda which came from the Russian universities. The socialism he accepted rather perhaps because it was revolutionary than because it was socialism. When he left school, he was a conspirator in embryo, differing from others of his age, class, and race only in that revolt burned in him with a fiercer flame, and that there was ever something stark and practical in his very day-dreams.

In 1885, at the age of eighteen, he became a student of medicine at the University of Kharkov, and there came in contact with a secret socialist organization, "Proletariat". He studied its principles, and read Karl Marx, though his interest in theoretical economics, apart from the practical business of revolt, did not get him beyond the first volume. In 1886 he was rusticated from the university, but at Wilno also he frequented the company of young socialists. The secret police were well-informed, and had marked this vigorous youth as one not likely to be long content with the mere theory of conspiracy. In 1887

an attempt was made on the life of Alexander III. Young Pilsudski was not concerned, but the excuse was sufficient. He was arrested and banished for five years to Siberia.

The Government was no doubt wise in its generation to send him to Siberia; but, having sent him, it was very unwise to let him come back. He, who went to that grim exile a visionary lad, came back in 1892 the most dangerous conspirator, the most formidable leader of revolt, in all the story of Polish revolution. The iron of captivity had entered into his soul and tempered it with courage and craft. He plunged at once into desperate courses against the Government. Amongst other changes that exile had wrought in him, it had confirmed his socialism. In his long solitude he had even succeeded in finishing Marx's *Das Capital*. "Socialism", he now thought, "is a real need of the immense mass of working people." But his socialism was still a by-product of his nationalism. The Russian Government was the enemy of socialists. If the Polish working classes could be converted to socialism, there would be yet one more cause of enmity between them and the Russian Government, and one more incentive to insurrection.

The organization of which he had formerly been a member, "Proletariat", had by now ceased to exist. He was in search of associates, and with his new belief in socialism as an instrument of revolution he found them in a recently founded organization, the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partja Socjalistyczna). He entered it in 1892, and in 1894 he became its leader. It was a hard school in which fate was teaching the future maker of Poland. This party was no instrument of constitutional reform. It waged guerilla war on the Russian Government. In times of order its weapons were conspiracy and the secret press; in times of disorder it fought openly with arms. Imprisonment, torture, and death were the penalties of discovery. It was a school in which many failed, some from faint heart, some from lack of skill to escape detection, and more still from that loss of touch with realities which so often besets conspirators. Pilsudski had the courage and skill needed for success, and above all he had a sense of realities strong enough to save him from losing himself in the conspirator's dream. In those days men began to realize that there was in him some strength beyond the measure of common men. "We never felt so safe and free", one said, "as when Pilsudski was sleeping under the same roof."

From 1894 to 1900 he edited a secret newspaper, *Robotnik* (The Working Man). For those six years, his skill baffled every effort to

discover its source, and this success, so unlike the usual fate of revolutionary editors and their journals in Russia, laid the foundation of the legend which now began to grow up about his name. But such success could not last. In 1900 his press was discovered and he was arrested. His situation was desperate. Siberia for life was the best that could be hoped for after so flagrant a relapse into treason. He had no hope but escape. To that end he feigned madness. It needed self-control beyond the power of ordinary men to succeed in a device so familiar to the secret police, but he did succeed. At St Petersburg he was put into the prison hospital, and thence he escaped to Austria.

The exploit, made possible by a fellow-socialist who joined the medical staff to share his flight, shed a halo of romance about his name. He became the best known and the most powerful figure in the revolutionary party. At this time his methods changed. He was a marked man and a fugitive. In the past six years, he had exhausted the resources of mere propaganda. Henceforward he turned to arms; and it was now that his true genius began to show itself. Pilsudski was a born soldier. The courage he had shown in conspiracy was the cool professional courage of a soldier. His intelligence was of the starkly practical sort which makes a strategist and tactician. For many years to come it was as a soldier that he worked, and to the end of his life his outlook on affairs was a soldier's outlook, expecting unquestioning obedience, and intolerant of words when deeds were needed.

He knew as by instinct the lesson which had cost others much to learn, that risings in Poland unaided from without were doomed to failure. They might gratify the natural passions of brave men, but they could not set Poland free. His first quest for help was in a remote field indeed. During the Russo-Japanese war (1904) he went to Tokio to ask the Japanese staff to assist a rising in Russian Poland. There he found Roman Dmowski, the leader of the rival group which aimed at profiting the Poles by collaborating with the Russians. Nothing therefore came of Pilsudski's mission, and for his next opportunity to fish in troubled waters he had to wait until the social revolution in Russia in 1905. The preoccupations of the Russian Government enabled him then to form with success bands of fighting men which could engage in Russia in attacks upon the Police. When the revolution was put down, his organization shared its fate. Its last act was an attack on a mail train at Bezdany near Wilno (26 September 1908), in which Pilsudski and his band captured 200,000 roubles which belonged to the Government. By the Government the affair was represented as mere highway robbery, and was long made use of by Pilsudski's

enemies to discredit him as a brigand. The charge need not trouble an historian. To Pilsudski the money was spoils of war, taken in action with an alien enemy, and he used it to pay for fresh plots.

He became more and more the guerilla leader of a military organization. Since in Russia the grip of the Government was now again too close for open resistance, he migrated into Austrian Poland, where there had been no revolution, and political conditions were more favourable to an insurgent. He there made himself the leader of a secret "League of War". This was affiliated to the Polish Socialist Party, but it was more than a league for propaganda. The military genius of Pilsudski foresaw that, if ever a time came when it was possible to strike for freedom, the insurrection must have ready the framework at least of a military organization, and he set himself to provide it. The League of War was to be the nucleus of a future Polish army.

In Galicia, as formerly in Russian Poland, his resolution and subtlety in conspiracy became a by-word. International events favoured him. Relations between Austria and Russia were growing more and more strained. It may be supposed that the doings of this victim and arch-enemy of Russia were not wholly unpleasing to the Austrians, who even gave him some semi-official recognition. His organization prospered. Other secret Polish organizations, although hostile to socialism, recognized nevertheless the potential value to the revolution of his military *cadres*. The universities were his chief recruiting grounds, and he laboured to teach Polish youth to be soldiers. He taught them that the qualities needed for the liberation of Poland were light-hearted courage, dauntless resolution, faith, and above all the facing of facts.

When the Great War broke out (1914), he mobilized his military organization as a Polish detachment to serve with the Austrian armies against Russia, and crossed with them into Russian territory. The story of his actions during the War, the restoration of the Polish state, the war with the Soviets, and the early political history of the republic, has been told in previous chapters. Polish history during those years was largely the history of his exploits, as a guerilla leader, as commander-in-chief of the Polish army, and as a political leader in the foundation of the new state. For our present purpose it is sufficient to recall the events which gave him his commanding position in Polish politics when the War was over. As commander of the Pilsudski brigade in the Polish Legion of the Austrian army he became a national hero, the man of destiny who was to steer Poland to independence.

Pursuing his policy of military organization for revolt, he formed a Polish Army Organization (*Polska Organizacja Wojskowa*), which operated in the rear of the Russian armies in Poland. When Russia had been driven from Poland, the time had come to show that Poles had been fighting for Poland, not for the Central Powers, and he struck to free his Polish troops from their control. The German Government then did him a good service; it imprisoned him in the fortress of Magdeburg. All obstacles were thus swept from the path of his reputation as a national hero. He was now the acknowledged enemy of Germany, Austria, and Russia alike, and was thus vindicated in the eyes of every Pole, by whichever of the three he had been oppressed. He became the personification of Polish aspirations, and when the collapse of the German Empire (1918) freed him from confinement at Magdeburg, he came to Warsaw as the natural leader of the reborn state. His leadership of the national army in the war with the Soviets in 1920, when he turned the tide of Russian invasion from before Warsaw and saved his country from sudden destruction, did whatever could still be done to strengthen his position. He refused to be elected President. In the eyes of the great majority of Poles, however, and particularly of those who had seen military service, he was now the creator and saviour of his country, great alike as soldier and statesman.

In 1923 the story of the nation ceased for a time to be the story of Pilsudski. In that year he left public life and military service. The period of construction and enforced national unity had been succeeded by a period of party warfare and political dissension, and Pilsudski would have none of the party system, and it would have none of him. He felt the paralysis of government which was caused by faction in the Sejm all the more because it was he who in 1919 had brought the Sejm into being. In 1923 it became the turn to govern of the National Democrats and the Centre (the peasant party, called *Piast*) led by Witos. Pilsudski thought even worse of them than of other parties. He retired to his villa at Sulejówek near Warsaw, declining to profit by his pension, and earning a bare livelihood for his family by writing. Thus he remained until his reappearance at the time to which the narrative was brought in an earlier part of this chapter, the crisis of 1926.

During these years of retirement his position was a peculiar one. He was by no means inactive. He took no part in politics, but he struggled tirelessly to maintain that military efficiency in which he saw the highest interest of the state. He sought to defend the army, and his own friends in it, against the politicians, who would wean it from him and make it theirs. He gathered round him all its discon-

tented elements, and carried on a polemic for his views in a stream of books and articles. He was not without some natural gift of expression. In youth he had had practice as a journalist for revolutionary newspapers, and in Magdeburg he had wiled away the hours of confinement by writing his memoirs. He now made use of his literary experience to write a book, *The Year 1920*, to vindicate his share in the campaign of 1920 against his detractors, who sought to ascribe the success to Weygand, or even to Rozwadowski. But chiefly he was active in his efforts to protect the army from the politicians. The army was his child. He could not bear to see it made a prey to political faction. The root of the matter was the relation between the executive staff and the Minister of War. The staff must be independent of the minister; only so could the army be saved from the abuses of the "spoils" system by which military posts changed with the Government, and officers were forced to be politicians. He flooded the country with interviews and articles in support of his cause.

His friends of the left carried the war for his ideas into the now all-powerful Sejm. Even from his retirement he thus drove from the Ministry of War his most inveterate adversary, General Sikorski. During the coalition government of Skrzyński there was a partial truce between him and his adversaries. In 1925 General Żeligowski, who was Pilsudski's devoted follower, became Minister of War, and Pilsudski's hopes rose high for a final settlement of the question in the way which he approved. The fall of Skrzyński's coalition and the succession of Witos dashed his hopes to the ground.

During the years of his retirement he had still loomed large in men's imaginations. To many in all parties or in none he had remained the hero, the strong man, and the born ruler. There were organizations, for the most part of ex-service men and youths, who were devoted to him, desired him to govern, and would occasionally make demonstrations in his favour in the streets. But amongst the active politicians of the Sejm he was feared by nearly all, and hated by many. His influence threatened their political existence. They knew that if he made a move for power against the parliamentary system they would be desperately hard put to it to resist him, and they more than suspected him of an intention to do so. Politicians of the Right and Centre were the most hostile to him because of his long association with socialist organizations. But the majority of the Left in the Sejm was hardly more friendly. In the socialist system there was little room for the influence of a soldier; and it was thought that the devotion of this great authoritarian to the principles of equality and fraternity was something

less than complete. Place-seekers and speculators hated him because he advertised and denounced their dishonesty. The more factious and party-spirited hated him for his contempt. But, apart from that, many who sincerely believed in popular institutions and parliamentary government feared him as a potential enemy of their political faith. This man, they saw, was by nature an absolute ruler. His power was incompatible with democracy as they understood and worshipped it. He spoke with authority and not as the Scribes and Pharisees. So various forces combined to prevent his voice from being heard. In our familiar phrase, the Government and the Sejm sent him to Coventry. It was dangerous to be in communication with him. But in this disregard by the Sejm of the national hero there was always something of apprehension and something of make-believe. In political circles it was bad manners to mention Pilsudski, as in days of old it would have been bad manners to speak to the apprehensive villagers of the dragon that lived near-by. But by their sidelong glances the villagers betrayed that they were well aware of the dragon's existence.

Thus for a time the politicians of the Sejm were able to banish from public life the man who both in ability and strength of will stood head and shoulders above his fellow-countrymen. They were helped to do so by memories of the partition. A people which had suffered so bitterly from the evils of arbitrary government was intensely jealous of its newly found liberties. It was in love with freedom, and associated freedom with the institutions of nineteenth-century democracy. Nothing but bitter experience could teach it that freedom for the Polish people, nay the very continued existence of a Polish state, might require at times some modification of those institutions. Pilsudski himself knew that until the nation had tried the Sejm, and found it wanting it would not be prepared freely to accept him and his methods; so he withdrew and bided his time. But the position was unstable. The Sejm failed to give the country security or prosperity. Men grew weary of its inefficiency and its ceaseless wrangling, and of the low standard of public duty and even of common honesty of many of its members. The great figure in the background loomed ever larger in their imagination. When the crisis of 1926 came, public opinion was already ripe for a change, and Pilsudski realized that the time had come when he would once more be accepted as *deus ex machina*.

Such was the position when Skrzyński resigned and Witos accepted office. It was soon apparent that in his own interests and in those of



the party system Witos had made a profound mistake. He had miscalculated the balance of political forces. He thought that public opinion was ready to accept once more a party government of the Right and Centre. In fact public opinion reacted violently against the prospect. Witos and his lieutenants were associated with the worst evils of 1923. The wage-earners and the Left were their natural political foes. The middle classes, and industrialists in particular, feared them for their bad record in finance. Pilsudski and his followers scorned them as the corrupters of the army.

The formation of the new Government was at once followed by symptoms of commercial and industrial panic. Capital fled abroad. The exchange fell. Eleven zlotys were paid for a dollar and prices rose rapidly. There were bankruptcies and suspensions of payment. Many wage-earners were thrown out of employment. The worst fears of the preceding years seemed about to be realized; and public opinion was prepared for desperate remedies.

Pilsudski struck at once. He published an interview bitterly attacking the new Government: it was the friend, he said, of corruption. He thrust to the front what for him was the essence of the matter, to gain which without further delay he was now prepared to force an issue. The politicians made the army the sport of their politics. It must be removed from their influence for good and all. His supporters of the Left in the Sejm followed him into the open. They published a manifesto describing the new Government as a challenge to Polish democracy, and refused to await even its first appearance in the Sejm before condemning it.

The effect of Pilsudski's manifesto in the inflamed state of the public mind was instantaneous. At once the convention, as it were, that he was not to be recognized in politics was blown away like a cobweb, and the ill-balanced structure of party government fell to the ground. Already on the evening of 11 May, crowds were demonstrating against the Witos Government in the *cafés* and streets of the cities. The demonstrations were as much for Pilsudski as against the Government, and amongst the demonstrators now were officers in uniform and men wearing ex-service badges. Pilsudski expected that Witos would collapse at the first touch; but Witos showed fight. He confiscated Pilsudski's manifestos, and dispersed the demonstrators with police. Pilsudski increased his effort. Some regiments had been collected in the neighbourhood of Warsaw for manœuvres. Malczewski, the new Minister of War and the friend of Witos, cancelled the manœuvres. But Pilsudski had a firm hold on the army. Several regiments declared

for him and marched on Warsaw, led by his ardent friend General Dreszer, and under the general control of General Żeligowski, Minister of War in the late Government. What Pilsudski exactly intended at this moment we do not know. It is probable that he thought that, although the demonstrations in the streets had failed, this military action would shake the Government down, and that President Wojciechowski would summon a government of Pilsudski's friends. But Witos still held out; the President took his stand upon the Constitution; it was too late for Pilsudski to draw back, had he wished to; and the issue had to be settled by arms.

The struggle was one of the shortest in the history of revolutions, and the issue of it one of the most decisive. A few days of civil war, confined to the streets of Warsaw, were enough to change the old order for a new one, and to establish the new in almost unquestioned authority. When the regiments marched towards Warsaw on 11 May, Pilsudski accompanied them, proclaiming to the nation that he had been fired upon in his villa at Sulejówek, and that his life was in danger. We need not in fact suppose that an old warrior who had so often jested with death was unduly perturbed by such an event, but certainly his presence with the regiments was necessary if anything was to come of the rising. On the afternoon of the 12th, he and his troops reached the right bank of the Vistula and occupied Praga, a suburb of Warsaw. The troops supporting the Government, at this time inferior in numbers, were on the left bank. By 5 p.m. Pilsudski's men were in possession of the heads of the bridges across the Vistula into Warsaw. Although it was not apparent to the Government, his speed and ingenuity had in fact already won the campaign. By crossing the Vistula he had outflanked his enemy and brought himself unopposed to the back-door, as it were, of Warsaw, and by his success in seizing the bridge-heads he kept the back-door open to him as soon as he cared to enter.

There followed a brief pause for a last effort to keep the peace. President Wojciechowski appeared on the Poniatowski bridge, and there Pilsudski met him. The President, a deeply-respected figure of earlier days of the struggle for independence, had acted as the first magistrate of a state must act at such a time if he is to be faithful to his vows. He had called upon the soldiers to return to their obedience, and had supported the laws which he had sworn to support. It was his misfortune, not his fault, that to set aright disjointed times it was necessary to act against the laws. He now called upon Pilsudski to withdraw his troops. The Marshal inquired if he would dismiss Witos.

The President refused, and withdrew to organize defence. In the meantime Pilsudski's followers of the Left in the Sejm had made a last effort to end the crisis constitutionally by announcing their secession from the Witos Government, and asking the President to form a new one. The President refused to see them, and all constitutional means had failed. About 7 p.m. Pilsudski's troops crossed the bridges and during the night occupied without resistance the northern part of Warsaw. The Government took up its quarters with the President in his residence at the Belvedere villa in the inner suburbs. On the following day (13 May) there were further efforts at mediation, but neither side would yield anything. Both sides hastened to bring more troops on to the scene, and now that mass of moderate opinion which is the true arbiter of revolutions began to show which side it was on. The railwaymen refused to work the lines needed to bring up the Government's troops, but they worked eagerly on those needed by Pilsudski's troops, and in particular by some regiments from Vilna led by General Rydz-Śmigły. The bombing of Warsaw from the air by the Government helped to harden men's minds against them. Early on the 14th, Pilsudski launched a general attack through the streets. Whatever doubt there was as to the success of his forces, superior in numbers and commanded by a great soldier, was settled by the defection of Government troops in the Citadel, in the rear of the Government's positions. By 5 o'clock the Marshal was surrounding the Belvedere, and the ministers were in flight. Now, when it was too late, detachments of Government troops began to arrive from Pomerania.

The President sent Rataj, the president of the Sejm, to the Marshal, resigning the presidency and directing that Rataj, who had been active in mediation, should assume that office, in accordance with the Constitution. He thus enabled the victors to legalize their victory with the least injury possible to the sanctity of the law. At a later date Pilsudski wrote, "We performed an historic act which was unique. I made a kind of insurrection and succeeded in legalizing it at once." The juridically-minded may well think that it makes little difference if the wolf of revolution is prompt to assume a legal clothing and become a sheep. It was none the less once a wolf.

The new order was settled swiftly and without difficulty. Indeed there could be no immediate difficulty, because the army was in command of the situation, and the Marshal had control of the army. As acting President, Rataj ratified the Marshal's choice of a new government. Its Prime Minister, Kazimierz Barł, and Zaleski, who

became Foreign Minister, were the Marshal's devoted friends, and the Marshal himself became Minister of War. For the rest party politicians were passed over or held aloof, and the Government was a collection of personalities rather than the coalition of leaders which Bartel at first tried to make it. The leaders of the Left, Pilsudski's habitual supporters, were amongst those who held aloof. They asked for assurances that the power of the Sejm would be strengthened by an immediate election. When the assurance was refused, they rightly considered it significant of the hostility of the Marshal to the parliamentary system, and they withdrew.

Street fighting had ceased on the 15th, and with the formation of a government the revolution came to an end. Through his friends and supporters in every corps, the Marshal's grip closed on the army as a whole and there was no subsequent challenge to his military authority. There can be little doubt that his success, and the speed and ease with which it was achieved, were acceptable to the great majority of the nation. They might not have approved it beforehand, but they welcomed it when it was over.

The forms of the constitution were now restored, but the realities behind the forms had undergone a profound change. What had been the cloak of a parliament and a party system had become the cloak of a single person. Men wondered what would come of the new stresses in the structure of government. Was the constitution to be shelved for a dictatorship? If not, what compromise was to be made between democracy and absolutism? And, as the root of the matter, what power was to be left to the Sejm? To understand the answers which Pilsudski gave to these questions we must recall his antecedents. He had been first a conspirator, and loved to work behind the scenes. To the end of his life he was secretive, disliked to give reasons, and would let none share his whole confidence. He had chosen to work with the Left, but rather because they were revolutionaries than because he was a socialist. He was indeed no equalitarian, and a temperament naturally dominating had been confirmed by military training. The efficiency which he understood was that of discipline. He thought his country would be lost without firm government, and he had absolute confidence in his own ability to provide it.

So far the description is that of an able dictator. Such a man would at once suppress all liberties, and govern through soldiers and secret agents from a palace or a camp. But as a description of the complex character of Pilsudski it is incomplete. He knew mankind too well, and he had too many facets to his mind, to think that the new state

would accept a direct dictatorship. In his early plottings and plannings he had learned to look into the hearts of men, and to appreciate the thoughts and passions which sway the multitude. He knew what orders men will take and what they will not. He knew above all just how far liberty must be restricted to achieve an end, and how to persuade people of the necessity for its restriction. Such capacities as these must make a man most unwilling to become an open dictator. They show him the danger of it to himself and the ultimate sterility of it to the state. He had, moreover, none of the little vanities or greeds. He sublimated his passions into an ideal love of Poland, and he hated with quite savage intensity men who used her name to advance their own interests. He was in short a born dictator who was too wise to care to seem to be such.

It was, as said, his habit to conceal his plans until the moment for action, and his utterances as to the future at this time were cryptic. During the rising he had hinted at socialist measures. "There must not be too much injustice in the state", he said to some journalists, "towards those who give much of their work for others." Now he dwelt not on social injustice, but on honest administration. "The question", he said on 24 May, "concerns above all the power of the state to punish transgressions and specially financial corruption." The socialists found their suspicions confirmed, that their old associate and new master had no more sympathy with them than with any other party. It was clear that his view of his mission was that he had come to save the country from the Sejm and from all its parties alike. On 29 May he made his first clear utterance, and it was significant of his purpose that he chose to make it to an assembly of deputies of parties who had supported him in the Sejm. He attacked the Sejm and its parties violently and bitterly, for their corruption in the first place, but for their incompetence as well. He kept his hardest words for his foes of the Right and Centre, the National Democrats, but in substance it was the institution which he attacked, not the men alone, and the Senate was included in the general condemnation. The gist of it was that the Sejm and the deputies must be abased, and that the executive must be strengthened. It was naturally supposed that this was the prelude to the abolition of the Sejm. The supposition was strengthened when Pilsudski allowed himself to be proposed as a candidate for the presidency in the election needed to choose a successor to Wojciechowski. On 31 May he was actually elected in the National Assembly by a substantial majority over Bniński, the candidate of the Right and of the old order, and the country went into transports.

There can have been few at the time who did not expect that now the Sejm would be bundled off and the Marshal would rule alone. But to expect that was to under-estimate his caution.

The course of action which he adopted in the days that followed was surprising at the time, but its sagacity was shown by its ultimate success. He refused the presidency, and gave his reasons in a public letter. As usual he was at pains to cover the sharp precision of his actions with dubious words. After claiming that the election "legalized" his actions, he wrote: "I cannot conquer my memories. They cannot be dismissed by an act of confidence in me. I must assert again, I cannot live without work, from which the President is debarred by the existing constitution." What did this mean? Since it seemed absurd to have any President but him, did it mean that the existing constitution was to be swept away? or did it mean that he was going to confine himself to looking after the army, and to leave the civil government to look after itself? Men did not know what it meant.

Pilsudski proceeded with his plans. He had Ignacy Mościcki elected President, a professor of chemistry, a socialist in earlier days, and his own faithful adherent. The Bartel Government was formally reconstructed on the occasion. But the first clear indication of the Marshal's plan of government and of his designs as to the Sejm was not given until a few weeks later, when the expected changes in the constitution were proposed. There was nothing radical about them. They amounted only to a large increase in the power of the executive at the expense of that of the legislature, particularly in the matter of the budget.

The measure was adopted on 2 August. Now, it was thought, the Sejm would be dissolved, and either re-elected with new strength, or a fresh turn would be given to the wheel, and it would not meet again. But the old Sejm was allowed to go on. The Marshal was going neither to make himself dictator in form nor to withdraw from civil politics, neither to end the Sejm nor to mend it. Fearing the acute jealousy which the nation still felt of the forms of absolute government, he covered himself with the inconspicuous cloak of a Minister of War; he secured for his nominees such powers as were necessary to ensure effective government; and for the rest he left the Sejm alone, and gave it rope to hang itself.

For the nine following years the government of Poland, like that of its great neighbours at the same time, was the personal government of a single man; but the rule of Pilsudski was very unlike that of other

and contemporary autocrats. It was their method to concentrate all power in themselves as conspicuously as possible. It was his to concentrate in himself only the minimum powers needed for efficient government, and to conceal their concentration. Seldom if ever has a personal ruler been so successful in avoiding those visible incidents of absolute power which provoke jealousy and revolt. Pilsudski's rule stands out indeed on the page of history as an example of an absolutism which was popular. His position may be illustrated by a comparison and a contrast with that of Oliver Cromwell after the execution of the King. Both were victorious generals. Both struggled with a factious parliament which in the end they swept away; for both, having liberated their country, were forced to govern it, since none other was strong enough. But a fundamental difference in their position reveals the secret of Pilsudski's strength. Cromwell's victories had been won over his own countrymen. He was the idol of a party; but, followed by the hatred of the vanquished, he could never be more. Pilsudski's victories had been won over alien oppressors; and he was the idol of a nation. He was detested no doubt by unsuccessful rivals; but there was no considerable section of his countrymen that had anything for him but admiration; and his image was so firmly impressed upon their imaginations that he could do without the forms of authority, and work his will by agents. At times he would even ostentatiously absent himself, in order to make it quite clear to everybody that he really was not a dictator.

Two threads are wound together in the story of his rule. One is the story of the strengthening, behind the scenes of politics as it were, of the hands of the executive government, and how it steered the country through grave economic and international troubles. The other is the story how in domestic politics the Sejm took the rope which it had been given and hanged itself. The threads are wound together, for it was the success of Pilsudski and his executive in saving the country from the dangers which threatened it which facilitated the overthrow of the Sejm.

In finance Pilsudski found an unbalanced budget, inflation in full swing, the currency on the verge of disaster, commerce and industry at a standstill, and credit none. The mere arrival of a government capable of action checked the rout. Credit was reborn, and foreign capital was no longer wholly unobtainable. By a happy chance for the Marshal the coal strike in England enabled the exports of Polish coal to be doubled between May and June (1926), to the great benefit of the zloty exchange. The fall in the zloty ceased. By December in-

flation was substantially reduced. Taxes were paid with more willingness, and the revenue increased. Economies were not only resolved upon but were actually enforced. To carry this part of the narrative forward to the close, already in the financial year 1927-8 revenue again exceeded expenditure. In October 1927, after the visit of an American financial mission, the stability of currency and exchange were secured by a loan for \$72,000,000 from the United States. It was made a condition of the loan that the status of the Bank of Poland should be made more independent, and that an American supervisor should be received in it for three years. The excess of revenue over expenditure was maintained until 1929-30, a series of good harvests greatly helping. In 1930-31, the world-wide depression, which had begun in 1929, caused a small deficit, which was put right by economies in public works. Otherwise the financial administration was strong enough to keep the budget balanced in spite of the depression. Times were then bad and prices of the chief products of the land, rye, barley, wheat, and timber fell disastrously. The depression, as will be seen, was severe enough to affect politics, and the discontent which attended it caused Pilsudski in 1930 to shorten the life of the Sejm and to close his grip on the Government. But the real achievements of his administration in finance and economics made the nation content on the whole to recognize that the depression was not his fault; and that his "strong government" was at least as good a help against its unavoidable evils as any other.

A feature of his financial policy was an appeal to the national imagination by the active development, whenever the budget allowed, of the railways and of the national port of Gdynia. The chief need of the agriculturists was for working capital, of which agriculture had been deprived by the break-up of the great estates and the impoverishment of the landowners. The Government met it by increasing from time to time the capital of the State Agricultural Bank. Thus by the double means of practical achievement and an appeal to the imagination of the nation the Marshal worked one of those seeming miracles of stabilization which were not infrequent in the economic troubles which followed the war, and which seem no longer miraculous when it is realized how much of such depressions is due to the ignorance of governments which do not know what to do, or to the weakness of those which are incapable of doing what they know that they ought.

In foreign policy what the country hoped from the new order was release from the constant apprehension caused by Poland's bad relations with her two big neighbours. It took Pilsudski longer to



improve matters on this scene than on that of domestic economy. He kept foreign affairs under his special supervision; and his Foreign Ministers, who were Zaleski until 1932 and then Beck, were his agents only. Through them he set himself to convince the world that Poland was to be no transient phantom, but a permanent figure on the European scene. In the first place he stabilized the foreign policy of Poland and redeemed it from the reproach of instability; and later he made use of the influence which he had thus gained to give his policy a new direction, turning from the traditional reliance on France to an effort to find a basis for stable relations with Germany, and even with Russia. Whether the latter purpose was present to his mind from the outset of his personal government may be doubted. It did not declare itself for a time, and it took long to develop. At first Zaleski announced (1926) that the new order meant no change in Polish foreign policy, or to its foundation on an understanding with France; and, taking full advantage of the influence of France at Geneva, he proceeded to raise Poland's international status by winning for her a place on the council of the League, not permanent, but extensible, and in fact regularly extended. Meanwhile relations with Germany went from bad to worse. Challenge and counter-challenge were thrown across the common frontier. Early in 1927 (9 January) Zaleski found it necessary to declare that every Pole would "die for all Pomorze and Upper Silesia". But to vindicate the unaggressive nature of his defiance to intruders, he shortly afterwards proposed, and the League adopted, a resolution outlawing wars of aggression (24 September 1927).

Relations with the Soviets were no better. They were embittered by the murder in Warsaw by a Russian exile of Volkow, the Soviet's ambassador (1927); and they were worse with Lithuania, whose dictator, Waldemaras, seemed actually to invite hostilities. Pilsudski confronted Waldemaras at Geneva, and offered him in set phrase peace or war (9 December 1927). Waldemaras said "peace", and this minor danger was brushed aside. Negotiations for a commercial treaty with Germany provided only an arena for strife. The arrest of one Ulitz, a leader of German political associations in Upper Silesia, caused an outburst of ill-feeling. Zaleski attacked Germany at the Council table of the League for her subversive activities in Upper Silesia. The Foreign Secretary of the Reich, Stresemann, struck the table with his fist and said he would not listen to such language (15 December 1928). After the outburst there followed a slight reaction towards less hostility. A commercial treaty was at last made

with Germany (7 March 1930), but Germany delayed its ratification and at once negated its effect by imposing high tariffs, and it did little to draw the two nations together. Danzig was an obstacle in the way of improved relations. Germany challenged Polish rights there at every turn, and the growth of Gdynia as a naval port alienated from Poland the sympathies of the Danzigers.

During the approach to power of the Nazi party in Germany (1930) relations with Poland became for a time worse than ever. The fire of Nazi propaganda had to be fed, and Polish rule in Pomerania (the "corridor") and Silesia was suitable fuel. Treviranus, an ex-minister of the Reich, spoke in the Reichstag demanding revision of the eastern frontier, and the quarrel blazed more fiercely than ever, to be renewed at the League. Poland was forced still to lean on French friendship, cemented by a loan to build a railway from Upper Silesia to Gdynia (April 1931), which was, of course, odious to Germany and Danzig.

Failing any improvement of relations with Germany, Pilsudski could at least mend matters with the Soviets. He prepared the way with an agreement renouncing war, the Litvinoff protocol, which was made at Moscow in 1929. When France began to turn to Russia for an alliance, the way was clear for the friends of France to do the same, and the Litvinoff protocol was developed into a pact of non-aggression (25 January 1932). Friendship with France had thus helped Pilsudski to patch things up with one of his hostile neighbours. But the same friendship stood in the way of his making friends with Germany, and no sooner had it served the first purpose than he pushed it out of the way to prevent it from hindering the second.

Poles and Germans had been quarrelling as usual, on this occasion about the visits of Polish and German warships to Danzig, when the new direction which the Marshal was going to give to his foreign policy began to appear. It was signaled by the substitution of Beck for Zaleski as Foreign Minister (November 1932). The record and sympathies of the two men suggested that Pilsudski was turning his shoulder at least, if not his back, to France. In the meanwhile, moreover, the Nazis had won their victory. Hitler had become Chancellor (30 January 1933), and the need for vehement propaganda against Poland had passed with the victory which it had helped to win. Two personal rulers now faced each other with the game in their own hands, no longer directly subject to the gusts of popular passion.

Whether in what followed the two men were really at arm's length, or whether there was some understanding, we do not know. The course of events was in some respects so inexplicable that it suggests

an understanding, but it may be that what happened was indeed the result only of the clash of two wills, of equal vehemence, but unequal coolness. Hitler had begun his relations with Poland by the usual demands for revision of the frontier and claims upon the corridor (2 February 1933). Beck replied in the Sejm that "boundaries were not changed by words". By what then? by war? A few days later, 120 soldiers were landed to reinforce the Polish garrison at Danzig. The High Commissioner of the League was told that the Polish Government feared an attempt upon its magazine on the Westerplatte, a part of the port. The reinforcements were not authorized by the League, and the High Commissioner required their withdrawal. Pilsudski refused. It was a challenge to Germany, and war seemed imminent. What would Hitler do? There would surely be an explosion in Berlin. There was no explosion. Hitler did nothing; and in a few days Pilsudski withdrew his detachment. To all appearance Pilsudski had successfully called Hitler's bluff, as formerly he had called Waldemaras'.

Strangely, as it seemed to those who could see only the surface of events, this incident was a turning point, which was followed by a rapid drawing together of Germany and Poland. The four-power pact which France, Great Britain, Germany and Italy entered into at this time on the initiative of Mussolini (25 July 1933) was supposed at first sight to forecast a revision of frontiers, those of Poland amongst others, and it alienated Polish sympathies from France. Pilsudski was believed at this juncture to have asked France what protection she would give him against Germany in the event of war, and to have been dissatisfied with the answer. He turned ever more apparently towards an understanding with Germany, and now met on her side with no rebuff. From both sides came novel declarations of friendship. The tariff war which had lasted since 1925 was brought to an end, and following up that success, on 26 January 1934, the two countries, which had been at daggers drawn since the war, fell into each other's arms with a ten years' pact of non-aggression. France gave an official approval, belied by her public opinion and her press. Russia was disconcerted, but Pilsudski took pains to reassure her by diplomatic compliments and the extension of the Russian-Polish pact to 1945.

'It was soon apparent that the German-Polish Treaty was to be no mere gesture. A further trade agreement followed (7 March 1934). A truce was made to warfare in the press, and mutual abuse and hostile agitation ceased. Other results of the new relations were not so favourable. Friendship with Germany threw a strain on relations with Czechoslovakia, and a recrimination broke out about the alleged

ill-treatment of minorities of the nationals of each in the territory of the other. To the east, when France and Great Britain proposed a pact with Russia, and Germany opposed, Pilsudski's new relations with Germany held him aloof from the proposal, and France was yet more estranged (September 1934). But he felt strong enough now to allow relations with France to become less than cordial, and he incurred her displeasure yet further by indirectly denouncing certain provisions linked to the Treaty of Versailles which limited Poland's liberty in dealing with national minorities.

Thus did Pilsudski give a wholly new direction to the foreign policy of his country. He released her from the tutelage of France. He established what might be a *modus vivendi* for her and her great neighbours. Their deep-seated causes of difference might only be thrust forward into the future, but he secured for the present a breathing-space in which to establish Poland in the family of nations. The Polish people felt that they had been delivered from the immediate burden at least of the constant apprehensions in which their relations with Germany and Russia had hitherto involved them.

It was against this background of solid achievement in the spheres of administration and foreign relations that the drama of the Marshal's conflict with the political parties and the parliamentary system was played out. It has been seen how in 1926 he was content, after adequately strengthening the hands of the executive, to renounce the forms of a dictatorship, to preserve those of parliamentary government, and himself to govern behind the scenes. The result of this policy was four years of bickering with the discredited but still partly independent Sejm, and then, until the Marshal's death, five years during which the Sejm lost its independence, and, reduced to impotence and silence, was used by the executive mainly as a registry for its decisions.

The bickering was not long in breaking out. Within a few weeks of the revolution, the Sejm attacked and overthrew Bartel as Prime Minister (September 1926). The Marshal showed how little he cared about their doings by twice putting Bartel back into power, himself assuming great responsibility for foreign relations, in order to strengthen the hands of his friends. Not finding that sufficient to check the Sejm, he went a step further and took the office of Prime Minister (2 October 1926). At the same time he sought to increase the non-party and national character of his administration by making friends with the conservatives, the landowners, and the old families.

He brought conservative landowners into the administration, and made a point of seeking the company of their principal figures. It was the end of whatever hopes were still cherished by the Socialists that their old associate might govern as they would have him govern, and thereafter the parties of the left opposed him without reserve. Between the Marshal, however, and the party which he had led in the dark days, the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), there was always some feeling of regard.

With the stabilization of financial and economic affairs, Pilsudski felt it safe to trust his cause against the Sejm to the chances of an election. None of the parties were his, and he was the enemy of party; but he had to have an organization for the election, although it was not to be admitted that it was a party; so he established a "Non-Party group of supporters of the Government" (Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem), choosing his friend Sławek for its head, and for its motto "strong government and no parties". It was designed to cut across all classes and existing parties, and the magic of the Marshal's name enabled it to do so. It did well in the election, but it came nowhere near a majority.<sup>1</sup> The people had accepted Pilsudski's Government *de facto*, for the good it did. But there was still much devotion to the democratic and parliamentary ideals, and much jealousy of the forms of liberty. They were not yet prepared to accept his Government *de jure*, and the bickering had to go on.

The new Sejm began badly, when at Pilsudski's orders the Communist deputies were removed by force for creating a disturbance. The members showed their indecision by electing as Marshal of the Sejm Daszyński, the candidate of the P.P.S., who stood, as it were, halfway between Pilsudski and his enemies. Pilsudski signified his displeasure with the situation by resigning the office of Prime Minister, but he gave it back to Bartel, who had parliamentary sympathies. The effect, however, of Bartel's appointment was more than negated by Pilsudski's pronouncements on the occasion, in which, in his vigorous way, he spoke of the Sejm as "a sterile, jabbering, howling thing, that engendered so much boredom as to kill the very flies with sheer disgust"; and his supporters at once began an energetic agitation for a reform of the constitution. The agitation was led in the Sejm by a group of followers of the Marshal with extreme opinions and military associations who came to be known as "the Colonels".

Under the influence of the Left there was at first some attempt in the Sejm to co-operate with the Government, but it soon broke down.

<sup>1</sup> 2,400,000 votes were given for the Government group, out of 11,400,000.

on a constitutional issue. Better financial conditions had caused the Government to expend large sums in works of development, and they had done so without the authority of the Sejm. The Sejm claimed that the expenditure should be subjected to its authority, but in vain; and by way of protest it took proceedings against the Minister of Finance, Czechowicz, before a state tribunal. The minister resigned (February 1929), but Pilsudski accepted responsibility for his transgression, and renewed his attacks on the Sejm. Bartel had now to choose between his parliamentary principles and his devotion to the Marshal. He decided for parliament, and the Marshal replaced him by Kazimierz Świątalski, who shared the Marshal's bitter feelings against the parties. Of this government some of the extreme Pilsudski group of "the Colonels" were conspicuous members. Their appointment signified that in the Marshal's eyes the time had come for harsher measures. Daszyński, Marshal of the Sejm, and Ślawek, president of the B.B.W.R., attempted mediation, but neither side would listen to the other.

The re-opening of the Sejm in the autumn (31 October 1929) was the occasion of an incident which showed the instability of the position. A number of officers gathered in the lobby. Daszyński bade them leave. They refused; and, when Pilsudski arrived, Daszyński refused to allow the session to begin until they did. Pilsudski withdrew, and the session was adjourned for a month. It was apparent that the issue between executive and legislature must be fought to a finish, and there followed a series of rapid changes as each side manœuvred to put the other in the wrong with public opinion. When the Sejm reassembled Left and Centre joined to censure the executive, and Bartel resigned. At this time there was some dissension amongst Pilsudski's followers. A dividing line appeared between the more moderate group led by Bartel, who had some regard for parliamentary principles, and the more "thorough" group led by "the Colonels", who had none. Pilsudski's choice of Bartel once more to form a government (29 December 1929), was thus a gesture of compromise. But the Sejm proceeded to censure one of "the Colonels" who was in the new Government, and again Bartel resigned. When Ślawek, leader of Pilsudski's political organization, was made Prime Minister, it was obvious to all that there was to be an end to compromise, and the contest was transferred to the country. The ranks of Pilsudski's followers closed up, and political tension was extreme. There were disorderly demonstrations in the towns, and some violent change seemed imminent. By August, the situation could no longer be con-

trolled without prompt action. Pilsudski took over the office of Prime Minister from Sławek (25 August 1930), and dissolved the Sejm.

In their extremity Centre and Left joined to present a common front to the Government. But the Marshal had made up his mind that there was to be no repetition of the inconclusive result of the election of 1928, and the day after the Centre and Left announced their *concordat* he arrested the chief leaders of the opposition, amongst them Witos, Korfanty, Kiernik, Liberman, and Barlicki, and sent them to solitary confinement at Brześć. Justified or unjustified, the action was decisive. He had chosen his moment well. His Government had given the country great benefits. He had seemed, at least, to show marked reluctance to put himself in the position of an absolute ruler. He had so managed things that year after year the Sejm had shown itself in the most unfavourable light. For all these reasons he was stronger now than in 1926, so much stronger that he had now not much to fear from the adherents of the abstract principles of democracy. The nation was now ready to accept his government *de jure* as well as *de facto*, and, for the rest of his life, democratic institutions in Poland were reduced to an empty form.

The elections were tempestuous, socialists and police came to blows in the streets of Warsaw, and there were more arrests among the politicians. But this time the Government's majority in the Sejm was absolute;<sup>1</sup> and released by the victory from a necessity for formal political leadership which he disliked Pilsudski could once more transfer the premiership to Sławek, and recede into that background which was his congenial setting, there to manage directly foreign politics and the army, and indirectly the whole administration. The now subservient Sejm began to discuss a reform of the constitution, in order to bring it into closer correspondence with Pilsudski's ideas of strong government. The only signs of opposition were efforts on behalf of the political prisoners. Ten were sentenced to imprisonment, of whom five, including Witos, escaped into long exile.

The Government was now free to occupy itself with the difficulties of the great economic depression, and with that conspicuous change in the basis of foreign policy, of which an account has already been given. In domestic politics events during the rest of the Marshal's life were not of equal significance. Assured control of the army made it easy for him at all times to ensure quiet and settled government; and he made and sought to make no great changes in the social order. It was not his method to regiment people politically, or to seek to impose

<sup>1</sup> There were 5,300,000 votes for the Government out of 13,000,000.

uniformity of ideas. His attitude to minorities was more liberal than "totalitarian". He promoted the special culture of national minorities; and allowed political dissentients as much liberty of dissent as was possible. Anti-semitism in particular he would not tolerate, and he encouraged the depressed Jews to look to him for protection. His first conception of the reborn state had been a Federation of White Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Poles, with the Poles first amongst equals. That had been impossible, but he remained tolerant of racial differences, and his ardent patriotism was not exaggerated into a religion of the superiority of his own race. The extremes of racial fanaticism would indeed have been strange in a Polish ruler so closely associated with Lithuania. The Siberian exile had other ambitions than the oppression of the weak; and Pilsudski did not make the mistake of seeking to strengthen Poland by persecuting the national minorities within its borders, and thus incurring for the state the enmity of some of its essential constituents.

In one quarter, however, the fever of suppressed national ambitions led to disorder during his rule. A subversive movement in the Ukraine came to a head at the time of the election of 1930. Pilsudski sent the political leaders of Ukrainian nationalism to join Witos in confinement at Brześć, and suppressed the movement locally by measures of great severity. The cleavage between the Government and the Ukrainian nationalists was deepened by the murder, by Ukrainian terrorists, in August 1931 of Hołówko, a leading peace-maker, and in June 1934 of Colonel Pieracki, Minister of the Interior, and a ruthless ruler in the Ukraine.

In domestic politics the principal constructive work of these years was that on the new constitution. Sławek resigned the premiership to devote himself to the task (May 1931) and was succeeded by Prystor, and Prystor in his turn by Jędrzejewicz (May 1933). There was a formal difficulty in the way of changing the constitution. The Government's majority in the Sejm was less than that required for the purpose by the constitution. Legal technicalities, however, were out of fashion. On 26 January 1934, when the Opposition had walked out of the House as a protest against constitutional change, the Government in their absence coolly passed the new constitution through all its stages. The Opposition protested, but it made no difference, and the new constitution was adopted (23 March 1935).

The constitution of 1935 expressed what Pilsudski thought to be the right relationship, for Poland and in his time, between the executive and the legislature. Like all his political conceptions, it was no logical



outcome of the principles of constitutional law or political theory. It was an empirical arrangement, designed to give legal form to his system of personal government, and to secure it for the future. If it had any model, it was the constitution of the United States; but many of its provisions were novel, and some of them, in effect at least, were obscure. They were designed to meet the circumstances of the times, and their effect at other times and under other circumstances cannot easily be appreciated. The relations of the head of the executive to the legislature are particularly obscure, unless he has overwhelming personal influence. The head of the executive is the President, and there is an elected Sejm, and a Senate of which two-thirds is elected and the remainder nominated by the President. The President appoints the Prime Minister, is head of the army, can dismiss the legislature and legislate for a time in its absence, has the treaty-making power, and is irreplaceable and irresponsible for seven years. President, Sejm and Senate can all initiate legislation, but the Senate is predominant over the Sejm, which has nevertheless a veto on a three-fifths majority of its whole membership. The legislature can in course of time pass a measure over the head of the President, if he does not dissolve it first. The constitution in short leaves the location of the sovereign legislative power in doubt; and it may be that this, which accorded so well with Pilsudski's system of the realities of absolute personal rule without its forms, was not unwelcome to him. It was clear, however, that both the intention and the effect of the measure was still further to strengthen the executive at the expense of the legislature.

When the new constitution was passed (23 March 1935) the Marshal was sixty-seven years of age, and worn with lifelong toil and early hardship. It was known that his life could not be much prolonged. The nation had now to pay the price that has to be paid for confiding national destinies to the authority of a single person; it had to face the doubt and danger involved in finding an heir to an authority which does not provide for its succession. The Marshal had striven to prevent himself from becoming indispensable, but he had not succeeded in a task inherently impossible. What could be done to ensure the continuation of his system was done by his intimates. Sławek, the new constitution adopted, resumed the office of Prime Minister, succeeding Kozłowski, who had succeeded Jędrzejewicz in 1934. Beck was tacitly chosen to inherit the giant's mantle in foreign affairs, and General Rydz-Śmigły, his faithful lieutenant, in military affairs. Thus prepared, the country awaited its loss. On the evening of 12 May 1935

Pilsudski died, mourned by a nation which owed to him more than to any other its resurrection from the grave of partition, and its salvation from the perils which beset its early steps.

His character can best be read in his story:

So much one man can do  
that does both act and know.

He had the combination of qualities which his country needed at a critical time, in action vigorous and relentless, in council resourceful and subtle. His powerful intelligence was wholly realistic; no prejudice or illusion stood between him and his object. It was wholly independent; he received no theories at secondhand. He followed no masters, and learned from his own experience only, and from that accumulated experience which is history. He was as single in mind as he was independent, and singleness of mind gave him a clearness of vision which enabled him to foresee events in a manner which seemed to his followers miraculous. His self-confidence was unbounded. To make a decision cost him an agony of thought, but when it was made he had no doubt of it, or that his countrymen must take his word for it. He had learnt early and in a hard school to read the hearts of men, and see how best they could be bent to his purpose. Without much use of the contemporary arts of mass-suggestion, he was skilful to attach men to him, the few by the spell of his personality, the many by his deeds and by the tremendous vehemence of his speech, and particularly of his invective. His utterances, unlike his reasoning, had romance. They were carried to the hearts of the people by a poetic quality, the poetry of simple things. When at a crisis an expectant audience awaited some statement fraught with fate, he would sometimes delight and amuse them with a tribute to the influence of the stars, the flowers and the open air.

We are still too near him to see him or his period in true perspective. We have not yet access to much of the information most necessary for the understanding of the history of his times. He adhered to no abstract principles of government, and it may be that his system will prove not to be in the direct line of the evolution of the Polish state. This may, however, be said of his rule. He gave his countrymen a new standard of efficiency in government, and of duty and devotion. He taught them not to take the word for the deed, and with his strong hand he kneaded the incoherent materials of the new state and moulded them into a serviceable form. Whatever the future may hold, the spirit of the Polish nation will ever derive inspiration from his memory.



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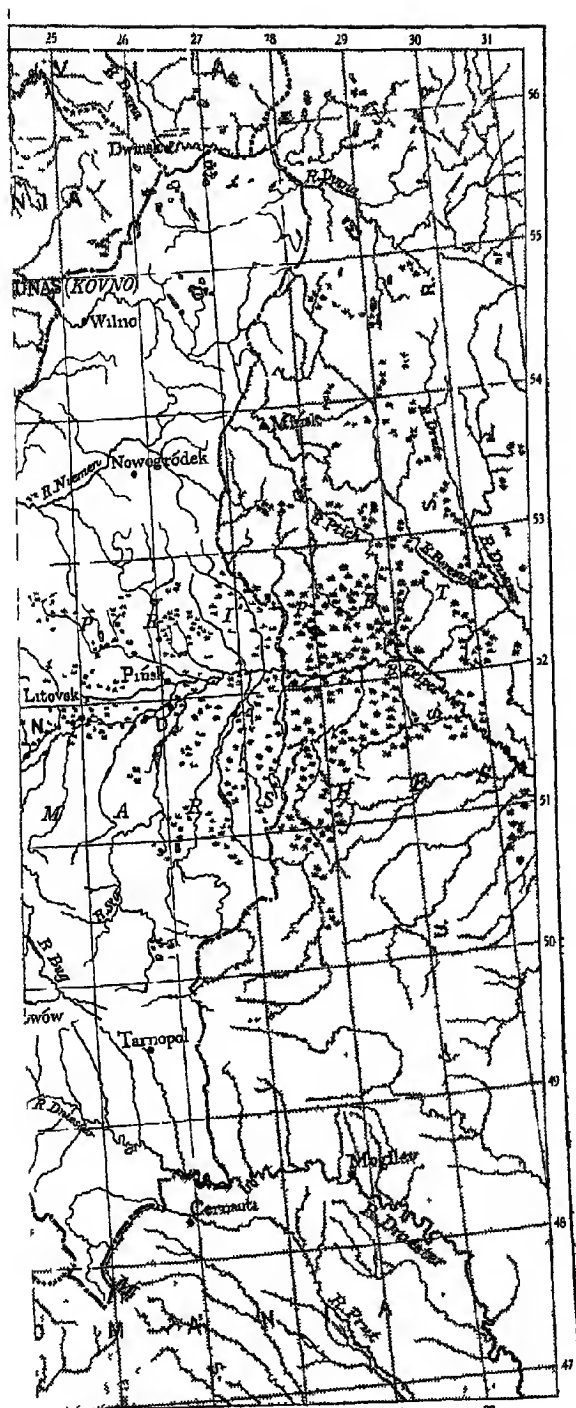
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